

SOCCER

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WEEKLY

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GOLDEN GREEK GUEST!

*Scoop
Photo of
Patikas
Injury on
Back Page*

JIMMY PATIKAS, who has made a huge impact on Greek Soccer since his transfer to AEK from Sydney Croatia, could play in this year's Olympic Airways National League.

BY DAVID JACK

Croatia want to use Patikas as a guest player during the Greek off-season.

Negotiations are at an early stage but the situation looks promising.

Tony Basic, president of Croatia, confirmed that Patikas is interested in playing a few matches here.

"Jimmy wrote to me last week and made it quite clear that he has retained a strong affection for Australia," said Basic.

"He would certainly be a big attraction in the NSL after doing so well with AEK."

Croatia coach Vedran Rozic also believes Patikas wants to line up with Croatia again.

"The Greek competition finishes in May and, as soon as he is free, he could play for us," said Rozic.

And there is not much doubt that Jimmy would be welcomed back. "We could certainly find a place in our team for him," said Rozic.

The only problem might be AEK. Would they agree to their star

Aussie risking injury in the NSL?

That is something which will have to be sorted out.

Patikas collected rave reviews in his early matches in Greece and was bitterly disappointed last week when his nose was accidentally broken by a team-mate in the match against Olympiakos.

Jimmy was rushed to hospital by ambulance and will be out of action for a month.

After the accident, the entire AEK team and officials visited the hospital to cheer him up.

Greek newspapers are full of praise for the former Sydney Croatia ace.

He has been including in the "Ethnos" team of the week twice, with nine out of 10 points.

And the Athens "Athletic Echo" wrote: "The great Patikas is teaching us how to play modern Soccer!"

Praise indeed. That's even more flattering than the things English papers are writing about another Aussie, Craig Johnston.

Through it all, Jimmy Patikas retains his modesty — he is not the sort of player to suddenly find his hat has got too small.

He will undoubtedly be a very welcome guest if he turns out this year in the colours of Sydney Croatia.



This super action shot of Jimmy Patikas won the "photographer of the year" award for Stephen Holland of the Sydney Morning Herald.

INSIDE THIS WEEK: JENNINGS SIGNS AT LAST — P7, PETER SHARNE, REGULAR FEATURES — CHIT CHAT, VEST, JOHNSON

The Editor

THE new Soccer season has not really started yet but already there are signs that the bitter squabbles of the past are to be repeated again in 1986.

That is sad. But it emphasises what has so often been said before... that the greatest of all sports has a death wish in Australia.

In the past few days, there have been rumblings of discontent, accusations tossed around and even the old favourite, talk of a "breakaway."

Soccer in this country needs a breakaway like it needs a hole in the head.

In this context, it was good to hear the vice-chairman of the Olympic Airways National League, Tony Labbozzetta comment: "We do not want to see a breakaway."

Yet the mere fact there has been talk, even threats, of a breakaway should cause concern to everyone.

The enormous goodwill for Soccer which was built up the hard way by a bunch of players called the Socceroos only a few months ago should not be squandered.

During the Oceania qualifying games in the World Cup and, particularly in the final eliminating two matches against Scotland, thousands of Australians were interested in what was happening to Frank Arok and his national team.

Even the Aussie Rules and Rugby League and Rugby Union types were vitally interested in the progress of the Socceroos.

This happened once before - in 1974 when Rale Rasic took Australia to the World Cup finals in Germany, but the game's administrators surrendered all the goodwill which had been won in 1973-74 when they provided the code with the wrong sort of headlines so soon after the World Cup effort.

At the moment, Australian Soccer is held in high esteem by most sporting folk in this country. Let's keep it that way.

If the Australian Soccer Federation and the Olympic Airways National League have a dispute, let them sit around a table and sort out the problem rationally.

There must be goodwill on both sides. There must be compromise. There should be nobody issuing threats.

Basically, the NSL has a good case for getting more autonomy over its own affairs.

If the NSL clubs, who, after all, pour most of the cash into the game, want to make their own plans about how their competition should be run, so be it.

We are not convinced that people from State Federations have the right to tell them how the NSL should be organised.

The set-up is not unlike the F.A. and Football League partnership in England.

The League has prime responsibility for the professional game at club level while the F.A. controls International Soccer, juniors and amateurs.

The system seems to work satisfactorily. While the F.A. is nominally the body controlling ALL Soccer in England, it would never tell the League how it should run the professional game.

If Australia's National League wants a 14-team competition, or 16, 18, or 20 teams, the ASF should not have the power to decree: "You cannot do it."

But as we said, there must be give and take on both sides in all disputes if Soccer is to prosper in the largely hostile atmosphere of Australian sport.

Get together, gentlemen, and keep the peace... please!

BUTLER GIVES APIA CONVINCING WIN

TERRY BUTLER, often described as the "brains" of the Apia Leichhardt side, showed he can also score vital goals at the Croatian Sports Centre where Apia played Sydney Croatia in the NSW Ampol Cup.

The goal Butler scored against Croatia made certain of Apia's quarter final spot, although on chances created in the match, there was never any doubt that Apia were the better team.

They won convincingly, even if Butler's goal was all that separated the two sides.

The architect of the vital goal was Alex Bundalo, who did the spade work for Butler to slip the ball under the body of goalkeeper Greg Woodhouse 15 minutes into the

second half.

The defeat was disappointing for Croatia who, after many weeks of transfer dispute, were able to field their new left-back, \$25,000 Socceroo Graham Jennings.

BY DAVID JACK

Apia coach Rale Rasic selected Butler in direct opposition to Jennings, believing Jennings might be short of match practice.

"The move paid off nicely," said Rasic, "and Terry did a good job."

Rasic was full of praise for other players, including Arno Bertogna, Louis Dounis, Jimmy Hristovski and Tom Steven.

Sadly, there were no reasons for celebration in the Croatia dressing room where an unhappy coach Vedran Rozic reflected on the defeat.

Obviously Croatia will play much better than this - particularly when Socceroo Zarko Odzakovic, who was rarely in the game against Apia, recaptures his real form.

NEWCASTLE DEFY ALL ODDS

BY FRANK COLETTA

THE battlers of Australian Soccer, Newcastle Rosebud United, defied all the odds and forecasts of doom to convincingly take out Group D following their 3-1 win over Canterbury Marrickville at Marconi Stadium.

Former Australian Youth international Sean Ingham opened the scoring in the 33rd minute when he neatly finished off a cross from Ross Milosevic.

Prior to this though Ingham was having a horrendous time as he missed three clear-cut opportunities, twice hitting the post.

Seven minutes into the second half Newcastle went two ahead when Milosevic and Bobby Naumov worked to give Ingham his second goal.

Canterbury did well to pull a goal back 10 minutes later when striker Mario Philippou smashed home a drive from the edge of the area.

Canterbury then valiantly pushed men forward in the chase for the equaliser but were unable to crack the Rosebud defence.

In attempting to grab an equaliser Canterbury were left vulnerable at the back and right on the stroke of full-time Derek Todd snuck in to make it 3-1.



CHRIS KALANTZIS

CANBERRA'S VICTORY TO NO AVAIL IN CUP

BY KEN HEALEY

CANBERRA CITY did not at any stage look likely to score the seven goals they needed against Avala, to be able to edge Inter Monaro out of the 1986 Ampol Cup quarter-finals.

The side from Australia's capital won the match 2-0 at the St George Stadium with the goals coming from dynamic striker, Manis Lamond and the evergreen, Ian Gibson.

With only five contracted players on the pitch, Canberra played naively as Avala's offside trap was effective 15 times in the first half alone.

For the first quarter of an hour, it was Avala in fact that looked like the NSL team, as it forced a number of corners.

In the 26th minute, Manis Lamond broke the deadlock when his left-footer had too much power for the goalkeeper

Barry Thurlow, who got a hand to it.

Vic Fernandez supplied the final pass.

Avala continued to impress, with Tony Jorden at the back and Mick Bratkovic on the wing prominent.

As if disgusted by a game full of mistakes, Ian Gibson, moved from the wing to centre-forward and scored a solo goal that was all class. He beat half the Avala team in a 40 metre raid and placed the ball past Thurlow.

Lamond was substituted after an hour and substitute Tom Alexakis was foiled by a good smothering save by Thurlow.



IAN GIBSON

VAN EGMOND GETS TWO FOR MANLY

BY DAVID JACK

TWO-GOAL Gary van Egmond was the Manly hero in their 2-0 Ampol Cup victory over local rivals Warringah.

It was a disappointing match between two teams who are deadly rivals and who should be capable of providing much better entertainment when they meet.

Fortunately, few spectators from Manly or Warringah paid to watch the below-par contest.

The NSW Soccer Federation made sure there would be few fans at the game when they made the ridiculous decision to play it some 40 kilometres from the home of BOTH teams.

It is, surely, one of the craziest fixture schedules of all time, but, if taking these teams to the Croatian Sports Centre makes sense to anyone, I will be interested to hear why.

Warringah were clearly second best although they should have scored at least once... when Hilton Silva blasted a penalty kick high over the crossbar 13 minutes from the end.

At least Manly deserve a kind word for the two van Egmond goals and the score would have been 4-0 had Dean and Stewart not missed badly when they should have scored.

OLYMPIC'S PACE SINKS SAINTS

BY JOHN ECONOMOS

SYDNEY OLYMPIC with sheer, power-packed, pace sent St George crashing out of the Ampol Cup with a 3-0 defeat at the St George Stadium, serving a warning that they will be a major threat in the NSL this season.

A super-fit Olympic launched relentless raids that saw them race in three snappy goals within 28 minutes to have St George rocking and reeling under this non-stop pressure.

But with a little more steadiness inside the box, Sydney Olympic could have added another two goals to their card.

Left-back, and star of the match, Gary Phillips, set up the first goal for Stuart Johnstone as early as the eighth minute with a lovely cross from the touchline into the St George box.

Just three minutes later, block-busting Chris Kalantzis scored the second when he latched perfectly onto a cross from the right by Johnstone to have the Saints in real trouble.

Making their fine debut for Olympic, were newly signed twin-strikers, Stuart Stevenson and Simon Brandt. Brandt looked sharp but was denied a goal when his shot four minutes from full-time hit the post.

The St George midfield was woeful and failed to shut-down quickly the play-making qualities of Peter Raskopoulos and Vicente Estavillio who repeatedly sprayed long balls over the top of the St George back-four.

Former Uruguay international, Estavillio had the Olympic fans delirious when he slotted Olympic's final goal in the 28th minute through excellent team-work with Stevenson.

Estavillio instigated the raid from half-way, knocking a pass to Stevenson. Stevenson

being closed-down inside the box, angled a flat-cross to the right where Estavillio had backed up to slot past Terry Greedy.

Marshall Soper left no doubt as to who is the crowd's favourite when the powerful striker replaced Estavillio in the 56th minute amid a huge crowd roar.

Soper following through, crashed into goalkeeper Greedy and the two players scuffled on the ground as players from both sides raced into the melee.

Referee, Richard Lorenc, displayed super efficiency by acting swiftly to dissolve a possible ugly scene.

Stars for Olympic were Phillips with his solid tackling and enormous contribution to the attack, aided by Brandt, Stevenson, Johnstone and Estavillio.

For Saints, new left striker, Zoran Beluzic tried hard but lacked complete support from behind.

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MICHELLE KASSEL is an 18-year-old University student who loves to frolic on her favourite beach during her spare time, along with getting into sports such as netball and touch football.

We know you'll get a KICK out of seeing Michelle as our Page 3 Soccer Beauty. Photo: Uwe Kuessner.



MARCONI DO IT EASY

BY FRANK COLETTA

EASILY the most impressive side in the NSW Ampol Cup has been Marconi and they proved the point when they overpowered Inter Monaro 3-0.

Marconi asserted their authority as early as the sixth minute when their little dynamo David Lowe chested down a pass and rammed home his drive from the edge of the area.

From then until the break Marconi were content to cruise along and play possession football.

They had one serious scare however when in the 27th minute both Baz Giampaolo and Victor Trajanovski beat the offside trap only to have a brave save by Bruce

James deny them.

In the 56th minute Lowe was again in the action when he raced down the flank and crossed into a crowded area. Following a mad scramble newly promoted forward Tony Henderson planted the ball into the net.

Nine minutes later Marconi's right-back, Paul Carter, strode away from the Monaro defence and following a 30 metre run easily beat the keeper from an angle.

GOALS AND MISTAKES

URUGUAYAN AUBURN and Polonia had a 3-3 draw at Melita Stadium in a game that was not for the purists by any means.

Polonia went into the lead after 18 minutes when full-back Quin Chau scored.

But Auburn struck twice in succession through defenders Krslovic and Jones to take a 2-1 lead into half-time.

Polonia levelled at 2-2 in the 42nd minute when their Polish import Andrej Pop punished one of many defensive errors in the game with a rasping drive from the edge of the area.

Pop was instrumental in giving Polonia a 3-2 lead when he produced the cross for Piriz to head home.

But Auburn squared it all up at 3-3 when O'Donnell scored from eight metres with a side-footed shot.

SUB'S GOAL WINS MATCH

THE local derby between Fairy Meadow and Wollongong Macedonia at Towradgi Park brought Fairy Meadow a 1-0 Ampol Cup win.

The scorer of the only goal was substitute Craig Warburton who scored from inside the penalty box when there was some indecision in the Macedonia defence 19 minutes into the second half.

There was little to choose between the teams in a dull first half but Meadow were certainly on top after the interval.

Coach Mike Johnson said he was very pleased with his team's good show, particularly after failing badly 4-0 against Parramatta Melita a week earlier.

Martin Ind and Jim Bell were in fine form for the winning side.

Geoff Robinson, Macedonia's goalkeeper, broke a finger in the first half.

SHIRE MISS TOO MANY CHANCES

SUTHERLAND SHIRE will have to improve their shooting if they are to win anything in 1986.

Always a power in the NSW State League, Sutherland needed to beat Kuringai at Towradgi Park to have a chance of making the Ampol Cup quarter-finals.

It was not to be... and the Shire have only themselves to blame for their elimination.

The goals were there

for the taking. Sutherland did not take them.

For most of the second half, Sutherland were in command but they tossed away three or four good scoring chances.

Apart from their front line misses, the Shire looked a competent side but probably not a team you'd back to win the State League.

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MELITA SECURE SPOT

BY FRANK COLETTA

MELITA EAGLES secured an Ampol Cup quarter-final berth with a hard fought 2-all draw with Wollongong City at Marconi Stadium.

The 20-year-old striker Wayne Farnsworth opened the scoring in the sixth minute when he pounced on a deflection off Ray Vliestra and drove home from 16 metres.

Wollongong's newly acquired midfielder, Soul Rivero, then evened it up in the 16th minute when he brilliantly curled home a free-kick from 20 metres.

It was a match befitting the Maltese festival night.

Farnsworth, who has returned from a year off

with injury gave the home crowd more to cheer about in the 35th minute when he chested down a cross from Spiro Serbas and finished well.

The second half was continuous end to end stuff, much of the play having the crowd in raptures.

A penalty was awarded to Wollongong 15 minutes from time when Ken Wilson fouled Stefanovski.

David Batten converted the spot-kick but it wasn't enough to deny Melita a point and a subsequent spot in the quarter-finals.

AMPOL CUP TABLES

GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sydney City	5	3	1	1	8	5	7
Melita Eagles	5	1	3	1	6	3	5
Blacktown	5	2	1	2	7	6	5
Wollongong City	5	1	3	1	5	4	5
Fairy Meadow	5	2	1	2	3	7	5
Wollongong Macedonia	5	1	1	3	4	8	3

GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leichhardt	5	4	1	0	10	2	9
Sydney Croatia	5	3	1	1	10	4	7
Sutherland	5	2	2	1	9	5	6
Ku-ring-gai	5	1	3	1	3	3	5
Manly	5	1	0	4	4	9	2
Warringah	5	0	1	4	2	15	1

GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Marconi	5	4	1	0	12	1	9
Inter Monaro	5	3	1	1	14	6	7
Canberra City	5	2	3	0	7	4	7
Rockdale	5	0	2	2	6	11	3
Avala	5	1	1	3	4	12	3
Penrith City	5	0	0	4	3	11	1

GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Newcastle	5	4	1	0	11	6	9
Sydney Olympic	5	3	1	1	13	7	7
St George	5	2	1	2	10	9	5
Canterbury	5	2	0	3	4	6	4
Polonia	5	1	2	2	11	15	4
Uruguay Auburn	5	0	1	4	6	11	1

PLAYERS & COACHES WANTED

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CHIT CHAT



A picture of the lavish Marconi Club.

THE magnificent Marconi social club could have a new president on February 23 when elections are held.

One of the candidates for the job is Tony Labbozzetta, the vice-chairman of the Olympic Airways National League.

■ ■ ■

IT looks as if Soccerro Robbie Dunn will have a court case to fight before he can turn out for Adelaide Hellas.

The gaint defender had hoped to return to SA from Preston in time for the NSL season, but the Melbourne club says he will have to serve out his contract.

Dunn is claiming he should be released for \$12,000 according to his contract.

Hellas has contacted solicitors, and the NSL, and is adamant Dunn can sign for them.

■ ■ ■

WOLLONGONG CITY assistant coach Glenn Fontana has his sights firmly fixed on a successful career as a coach.

He recently obtained his senior badge and certainly seems keen to learn as much as possible about his craft.

Fontana scored his share of goals with the Wolves as a striker and started his coaching career with Illawarra junior teams.

Last year he played with, and coached, Fairy Meadow's reserve grade side and is keen to make a reputation for himself in the National League.

Deputy headmaster at a school in Helensburgh, Fontana had one season playing with Avala but has otherwise spent all his time in Illawarra.



WOLLONGONG CITY's Ray Vilestra hoping for an injury-free 1986.

CANBERRA CITY coach Roy Thomson has an unusual problem: how to show off the talents of tough defensive midfielder Andrew Brockbank.

The left-footer, one of the hardest tacklers in Australian Soccer, played last season on loan with Kurlingal, and Canberra now needs to sell him to the highest bidder. Brockbank is determined to live in Sydney, not Canberra.

He'd be a great acquisition for an understaffed squad like Canterbury-Marickville or Wollongong, and his former team-mates at Canberra and Monaro would not fancy being on the end of too many of Brock's uncompromising tackles.

LAST season it was Ray Vilestra... this season it is Larry Gaffney.

In 1985, Vilestra missed the first half of the season with a broken leg and this year midfielder Larry Gaffney is missing from the Wollongong City line-up.

Gaffney is nursing a broken bone in his left foot after lasting a short time in the opening Ampol Cup match against Fairy Meadow.

"It is an old injury and unfortunately there was no strapper about to strap it up before we played Fairy Meadow," Gaffney said.

"I won't be out too long and I'm keeping my fingers crossed I will be available for the opening NSL match against Marconi."

PETER RANKIN, former regular with Adelaide City, and at 22 having years ahead of him, may stay out of the game this year.

The tall front runner was given permission to train with Adelaide Croatia but this has now been withdrawn.

Croatia coach Peter Jaksa, who had stints as supremo of Adelaide Hellas and Footscray, is keen to sign Rankin for Croatia as he was one of the youngsters in his triumphant SA Youth team.

Jaksa, himself, has been out of the game for the last two seasons.

■ ■ ■

CALLS for upgrading ground facilities around Australia have NOT fallen on deaf ears it would seem.

At Marconi, the Bosley Park lights have been given a huge revamp.

Sixteen giant lights have been inserted on the four towers, four to each tower.

The improvement of the lighting is quite impressive, as is the bill... \$600 a light, \$10,000 altogether!

But Marconi are quite satisfied with the results which should now ensure televised matches at night.

All that remains to be done at the Marconi Stadium really is the development of a true grandstand with cover. Then it will become, if it is not already, one of the best grounds in Australia.

In fact the best thing to come out of Soccer in NSW of late is the fact that more and more clubs are attempting to make facilities at their grounds better.

■ ■ ■

GOOD news for Marconi, their Youth Soccerro centre-forward Rod Brown is back in training after being incapacitated for many months with pelvic trouble.

But it could be a few weeks before the red-head lines up for match action.

"The last thing we want to do is rush the boy back before he's ready," said coach Les Scheinflug.

LAST week's report in CHIT CHAT that several Sydney City supporters attempted to get into the Slickers' Ampol Cup match in Wollongong without paying has been investigated by the Slickers and all matters have been resolved.

It seems that in fact the supporters were not at fault and it was only a misunderstanding that led to the incident.

What happened was that one of the lesser known Sydney City players turned up at the gate with his girl friend but without a pass.

The NSW Federation representatives understandably could not let him through until verification was given and the whole thing was settled when coach Eddie Thomson arrived.

But full marks go to the Sydney City committee for investigating what happened.

■ ■ ■

SOMETHING new was seen in the way of players' numbers at the Melita v Fairy Meadow NSW Ampol Cup game.

The Meadow left-back had his number 3 the wrong way round, with the points on the figure facing right, not left!

STILL ON SYDNEY CITY, last week in Junior Chat it was stated that only six junior club sides play on their senior side's home ground.

Well there is a seventh. Of course Sydney City.

The Slickers juniors have played on the Athletic Field for as long as one cares to remember....

While they are sitting pretty financially for 1986, Adelaide Hellas are negotiating for another major sponsor to join Fairmont Homes, Yorke Motors, Commodore Pest Control and International Furniture and Electrical.

Word is that \$100,000 could be coming from Carlton and United Breweries.



KOSSIE — at home on the Sydney Athletic field.



LARRY GAFFNEY — Injury could keep him out of Wollongong City's opening NSL clash with Marconi.



MARCONI'S ROD BROWN — not quite ready for a comeback after injury.

THE linesman who didn't turn up was the only person who showed any judgment when Wollongong City played their Ampol Cup match against Wollongong Macedonia recently.

Referee Ken Small was forced to engage a spectator to run one of the lines and he was replaced by another at half-time.

It was in the second half that two Wolves players were booked after disputing decisions made by the stand-in linesman.

Wolves' secretary John Vlietstra was irate after the game, claiming the bookings should never have come about.

"In that situation, a referee should make allowances and those cards to Brian Cockley and Willie Murray could be very important to us later in the season," he said.

Why did the "real" linesman show good judgment?

The first half was played in 40-degree heat and the second in gale force winds!

IF you read the sports pages or watch TV you will know there is a very big gridiron player in the US known as "Refrigerator."

Wollongong City coach John Fleming was looking through his squad and the thought struck him he didn't have a real "strong man" he could call on.

Other players who have filled this role have moved on but assistant coach Glenn Fontana came up with the solution.

"Why not use Willie Murray; he can be our Refrigerator," Fontana said.

Murray is the smallest player in the Wolves' line-up and Fontana has christened him "Eskey."

WHEN Sydney City manager Eddie Thomson was assistant coach on the Soccerroos' World Cup trips, he lost a lot of customers in his haulage business.

Although it cost Eddie money, he said: "I would gladly do it all over again. It was great being part of the World Cup challenge."

APIA LEICHHARDT are counting the cost of the transfer deal which took Tommy McCulloch to Apia from Marconi last year.

"We have lost plenty. It cost \$33,000 to sign McCulloch and, on top of that, we no longer have the player," complained a bitter Apia official.

IF you want to see the best team in Europe in action, tune in to SBS television on Saturday at 6 pm.

There is a scheduled screening of France - Europe's champions - against Yugoslavia in their World Cup eliminator in Paris.

WOLLONGONG CITY full-back Jock Morlando will be playing in his fourth league in as many seasons when he runs out against Marconi to start the 1986 competition.

In 1983, Morlando was with the Wolves when they were playing in the "real" National League.

The following season he joined Fairy Meadow and helped them win promotion from Illawarra second division to State League.

Last season he was a regular in their State League line-up and now Wolves' coach John Fleming has him back at Wollongong City in the regionalised NSL set-up.

If ever Morlando needs to justify his promise in the big time this is it as the Wolves are certain to come under a lot of pressure in the early stages of the season.

JANUARY and February have seen almost daily phone calls from Canberra City to South America. One player on offer turned out to be the BROTHER of the well-performed striker the club thought it was talking to. Negotiations were quickly terminated.

Canberra is still chasing a Peruvian who, if he is what is claimed for him, could be one of the better South American imports. One of the stumbling blocks, is of course, the telephone numbers that keep cropping up as asking prices.

Meanwhile wily flanker Ian Gibson is hoping that Canberra will wait until April or May to snare Dumbarton striker John Bourke.

Gibson had permission to approach Bourke last month in Scotland, and is sure the tall school teacher would settle into Australian Soccer.

INTER-MONARO has an embarrassment of midfielders with six talented players disputing four vacancies in the top squad.

Carlo Ambrosino went home to Tasmania at the end of last season, vowing never to return. His cousin Angelo, one of Monaro's stars last year, was also unsettled, but both are back and playing hard.

Coach Frank Maccarone bought Ian Wotherspoon from Penrith, and the wee Scot will make it hard for countryman Billy Willox to win back his spot when he returns from holidays in Scotland in a month.

Tilly Carbone, who with Angelo Ambrosino and Willox made up one of the best-balanced midfields in the NSL last season, is also back in Queanbeyan after playing last season on loan from Marconi.



IAN WOTHERSPOON challenges Gerardo Gomez whilst playing for Penrith.

WHAT happened to the SA delegates at the recent meeting of NSL clubs and officials in Sydney?

According to reports WA, NSW, Queensland and Victoria were the only States represented.

THE excellent Melita Stadium will be officially opened by NSW Premier Neville Wran on April 6.

Melita deserve congratulations for the fine work they have done on the ground and in particular the new grandstand with its perfect view of the pitch.

IT WAS A real weird ol' night out at Melita on Saturday.

It was the auspicious occasion of the visit of Her Excellency Miss Agatha Barbara, President of the Republic of Malta.

The festivities were many and prolonged and in between them were two football matches which at one stage seemed to have been forgotten by the Melita constabulary.

You see as encountered at other grounds already this season reporters were given the 'cold shoulder'.

Now journo's don't expect any sort of special treatment and nor should they, just the regulation stuff to do the reporting everyone wants to read.

You see no one cared that the journo's were shifted away on that night out of their normal positions, okay it was a special night and that was accepted.

But then when it came to delivering the reports it was made all but impossible by a couple of thick-skulled officials at Melita.

The phone there was disconnected and when a plea for its connection was given, two certain officials whose names are not known made it clear that if there was anything to be phoned anywhere that a public phone somewhere on

the streets outside the ground was the only way!!!

It is enough to make your eyes water! But thanks to some quick work by secretary of the club, Sam Vella and official Charles Misfud a source of communication was found. Thanks are also expressed to club president Lawrence Dimech for his much needed help.

LIKE a lot of other teams, Monaro is still looking for a goalscorer forward. Yugal centre forward Frank Valastro has not impressed coach Frank Maccarone, and former Monaro winger Victor Trajanoski has not settled after five years in Yugoslavia.

Youngster Frank D'Addario shows promise, and spare-parts player John Walsh shows good positional sense up front, but the green and blacks may find it hard to fill the gap left by the elusive and unpredictable Chris Thamnids.

Speaking of unpredictable forwards, Tony Brennan is again training with Monaro after being placed on transfer at his own request. Could he be Maccarone's missing link?

SYDNEY CROATIA fans may not see new signing Paul Blute until the NSL kicks off — and it is possible he won't be seen even then.

The big Irish youngster has been training in Sydney with a view to playing for the glamour club, but now SA Croatia is reluctant to release him and has placed a \$7000 transfer fee on his head.

Blute went to Sydney last year, but the NSW club's line-up was too established for him to break in and he was told to try again this year.

IT was a miracle the referees didn't pass out at Sydney Ampol Cup matches a week ago when the temperature hit 100f.

They didn't just have to handle one match - they were also put through three hours of fitness training before the games.

BLACKTOWN CITY secretary dropped a significant comment when he said: "There is no certainty that the 1987 National League WILL be a 14-team competition.

"We are not convinced that the idea is a good one.

"If Sydney clubs cannot pull crowds in Sydney, why should Melbourne clubs bring in the fans?"

That is a very good question.

THE Australian Soccer Federation seems to think the national teams are the be all and end all of Soccer in Australia, but they could be wrong.

The basis of any nation's Soccer strength lies in a good club competition - the bread and butter of the sport.

England has demonstrated as much for years, although the Englishmen take things too far when their clubs refuse to release players for international duty.

Maybe the ASF should take note of what happened in West Germany recently.

The Germans, a Soccer-draft country, refused to compete in the Olympic Games football tournament because playing in it might interfere with their club championship.



NOT QUITE THE REFRIGERATOR, but no.42 is doing what most defensive linemen would do. Could this be what Wollongong City coach John Fleming is looking for Willie Murray to do?

ALTHOUGH Jimmy Patikas has signed a three-year contract with AEK of Athens, he has a clause in it permitting him to return to Australia after one year if he is not happy.

There's not much chance of that happening. Jimmy has been given the treatment of a hero in Greece and has been accepted with great friendliness by his new teammates.

"It's marvellous playing football here," said Patikas, even though he would still prefer to live in Australia.

IF national coach Frank Arok wants a Soccerroo back-up at left-back for Graham Jennings, Rale Rasic reckons he should look no further than Mark Brown at Apia Leichardt.

"I believe Mark is the most improved full-back in Australia this season," says Rasic, the new Apia boss.



MARK BROWN — Jennings back-up?

SOCCER — THE ONLY REAL FOOTBALL

CAN Soccer retain its position as the world's top team sport?

BY MIKE JOHNSON

In the wake of the riots, stadium tragedies, and falling crowds that dampened 1985, the question is being posed in many parts of the world.

I believe Soccer will continue to be the king of all the football codes, as well as all other team sports throughout the world, for many years to come.

The reason is simply that Soccer is the most fluid, free-moving game among all team sports.

Certainly this is the case amongst the football codes played here in Australia.

Rugby League increasingly mimics Grid Iron in America.

Grid Iron is the world's worst team sport.

It is propped up with saturation television, along with mass newspaper coverage, which has brainwashed a population already gullible through the diet of ballyhoo, hysteria and star worship on which they have been fed year after year.

Grid Iron terms such as "yardage" are commonplace among Australian Rugby League commentators today, as are the Grid Iron marked fields.

Rugby League is becoming more and more specialist as individual flair is crushed under grinding blanket defence.

Another American game, Basketball, is suffering virtually the same fate.

Like Grid Iron and Rugby League, it is filled with stultifying tactics and strategy.

Team plays are plotted out in advance.

Specialist groups of players are shuttled back and forward onto the field by coaches with computers and walkie talkie radios.

After the game, these same coaches lock themselves into rooms to study video recordings of their games to find out what went right and wrong with their plans.

Through the following

week they will spend numerous hours pouring over more video recordings of the next opponent, finding how best to nullify their ultra-coached, stereotyped plays.

Soccer, to date, is still far too flexible and innovative to have games won by a coach in a video room.

If it can continue to stay that way, it will retain the many devotees who still follow Soccer throughout the world.

From a playing point of view, the restrictions and on-field violence, with its consequent injuries, put Australian Rules, Rugby League and Rugby Union, way behind Soccer as a sport to enjoy.



'The world's worst football game is Gridiron' — says Mike Johnson.

TIME TO CASH IN ON CUP

BY ALAN VEST

THE value to Soccer of the Socceroos' great performances, first in winning the World Cup Oceania section, and then playing so well in games against Scotland was immense.

Now we have to make use of that great exposure, not only at national team level, but at club level too.

We have to promote the game at club level to an extent that has been missing for far too long.

We have good players, and at every opportunity we've got to "sell" them to the public.

If it means examining the way other codes promote the game, then that's what we must do.

First, though, let's have a good match day programme. Not only does this inform the spectator, but it's a lasting way to give exposure to the clubs, the players and of course the sponsors.

On top of that, clubs have to make sure that news with regard to the team and games, is readily available to the Press even to the extent of a phone call each day.

It's publicity we need in promoting our game.

PLAYER BRAIN - DRAIN MUST BE STOPPED

SAYS ALAN VEST

Were it not for the media support for League and Aussie Rules, both sports might be in danger of suffering the same fate as boxing, with insufficient players attracted to stereotyped and violent games.

Spectator support for all team sports has been on the decline for many years, for a variety of reasons.

Soccer has suffered in the same proportions as others.

County cricket in England and Sheffield Shield cricket in Australia once had many thousands of spectators at games.

Nowadays, spectators can be numbered in their hundreds.

Soccer must not allow itself to be submerged in strategy and defensive tactics.

It became great through the marvellous mobility, innovativeness and flair of its performers.

WITH more and more of our young players in demand overseas, there are two questions which need careful consideration and answers quickly. Both really are concerned with distance and money.

The questions are:

1) How do we ensure that our talented players overseas keep in touch and are able to play for the Socceroos when needed?

2) What can be done to have a strong League or Leagues to encourage players to stay and play here?

With regard to the first question, it is natural for any player with ambition to want to play at the highest level he can, and really he needs to do that to keep improving.

Players should not be discouraged for wanting to improve and play at the top, but some way must be found that ensures those players needed by the national coach are available when needed for international matches and in particular, build-ups for World Cups.

It's a complex situation, made harder because of the distance we are from the top Soccer nations and the money they are able to pay.

Solutions have to be found, though, because rather than diminish, with the talent that is emerging, more and more players are going to be in demand overseas.

With regard to top Soccer here and having the best possible competition to keep players at home, the same problems arise — money and distance.

Australia is a vast country, but if sponsorship can

be found then a National League will be the answer — and because we are isolated, I believe we should involve the top New Zealand teams as well.

However, if money is not available in sponsorship, ways and means of having elite Leagues in different States and play-offs at the end of the year in a Cup — type competition appears the logical solution.

Whatever the answers, action is needed, decisions need to be made, and quickly.

PLAYERS OVERSEAS

Craig Johnston Liverpool, Tony Dorrigo Aston Villa, Alan Davidson Nottingham Forest, Jim Patikas AEK, Peter Katholos Larissa, Oscar Crino Cyprus, David Mitchell Eintracht, Andrew Bernal Gijon, Anthony Franken Belgium, Warren Spink Luton, Eddie Krncevic Belgium, Tommy Caton Arsenal.

Plus players who have been on trial overseas:

Frank Farina, Tom McCullough, Robbie Slater.

It's not a bad team, Franken, Davidson, Bernal, Dorrigo, Katholos, Johnston, Patikas, Crino, Krncevic, Mitchell, Spink.



AUSTRALIA'S DAVID MITCHELL, now with Eintracht, — how do we keep the talent here?

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THE GLOVES ARE OFF

Australia's World Cup Goalkeeper

By Terry Greedy

IN my capacity as a primary school teacher, I have had the pleasure of coaching many boys from Under 8s to Under 12s



With a little more composure in front of goal, Robbie will soon start knocking in the goals regularly.

David "Bronson" Ratcliffe's mysterious ankle injury, does not appear to be responding to treatment.

Could we be witnessing the demise of "The Man of Steel?"

St George players were put through an extensive programme of tests by the club doctor, Peter Henke and physiotherapist, Pedro Reiz to determine our level of fitness for the coming season.

Mike Gibson showed he is benefitting from the coaching he is receiving by topping all the tests.

A faulty treadmill, made it virtually impossible for me to register a decent time.

Doctors were amazed I was able to continue for as long as I did under the circumstances.

The fun and excitement gained by these boys from their weekly Soccer matches is tremendous.

As the emphasis is on enjoyment during the school sports afternoon, the pressure related to their Saturday Soccer is removed and the boys respond by producing a more relaxed game.

The most disappointing aspect regarding Junior Soccer, is the attitude adopted by some parents.

Whilst still a minority, these parents often disregard the child's position and create a pressure situation where the child feels he HAS TO WIN at all costs to please mum and dad.

As a consequence, the child soon becomes disheartened.

Enjoyment is destroyed, along with the desire to play, and another player, eventually, is lost to the code.

In Europe, boys and girls rarely play organised, competitive Soccer before they reach the age of 12.

The junior years are devoted to fostering skills and enjoyment in the game.

This approach should be used in Australia.

Children should be encouraged to participate in as many sports as are available.

Only after experiencing a variety of sports should they be asked to select those which they wish to concentrate on.

Australian Soccer depends on the development of junior talent.

Maybe by concentrating on Soccer from a later age, fewer boys will drift from the code.

With the appearance of Miklos Orszagh, (St George's new player from Yugoslavia), and the greatly improved performances of Mike "Grub" Grbveski, the players at Saints are confident of a Top Five position at season end.

What a great pity Robbie Slater has moved clubs.

It will only be a matter of time before Robbie, (now with Blacktown City) becomes one of Australia's most feared strikers.

To date, he has shown he possesses the skills and pace necessary to be a top striker.



RATCLIFFE's achilles heel?

REFEREES, seem to be continually singled out for criticism, and rightly so.

The refereeing in some of the current Ampol Cup matches, has left a lot to be desired.

The only positive aspect is maybe we'll appreciate the regular NSL whistlers when the season kicks off. But I doubt it.

The performances of the referee in the Australia vs Scotland clash in Melbourne, showed how important the whistler's contribution is to the standard of the game.

This match proved to be highly entertaining as well as exciting due in no small way to the performance of the Brazilian referee.

Hopefully, our very own referees benefitted from watching the high consistency displayed by this referee.

SYDNEY CROATIA SIGNS JENNINGS

GRAHAM JENNINGS, Australia's World Cup left-back, has at long last signed with Sydney Croatia for \$25,000.

BY JOHN ECONOMOS



GRAHAM JENNINGS in action for Australia against New Zealand in the World Cup qualifiers. Jennings is now with Croatia.

Jennings, asked his former club, Sydney Olympic late last season for a transfer, after seven consecutive years of service.

But wrangles over his original transfer fee prevented Jennings from going to Sydney Croatia, following the \$30,000 fee placed on his head by Olympic.

Jennings had his appeal

heard by the NSW Appeal's Committee recently, but they upheld Sydney Olympic's figure of \$30,000.

Croatia was adamant they would not pay this fee, claiming it was very high for a defender.

After further negotiations, the two clubs arrived at a settlement of \$25,000 plus a game be-

tween Croatia and Olympic, with the gate-take to be split 60%-40% in favour of Croatia. The date of the friendly match is to be determined.

Last night, Tony Basic, Sydney Croatia's president, told us:

"I am happy we have finally settled this affair. We value Graham's ability

as a player, as well as his excellent character.

"Our coach, Vedran Rozic, holds Graham in high esteem and his place in our defence-line will make a big difference," Basic promised.

But Sydney Croatia, determined to grab the NSL title from Sydney City this year, is currently

in the process of signing another big name from overseas. At this stage, his identity is a well kept secret, but we can tell you the player is a central defender of high quality.

Jennings meanwhile, made his debut for Croatia last Sunday in the Ampol Cup match against APIA.

ENGLAND'S BOSS PRAISES ARABS

ENGLAND national team boss Bobby Robson, just back from Cairo where England beat Egypt 4-0, will return to Egypt next month.

Robson wants to watch World Cup opponents Morocco in the African Games when they play Cameroon and Algeria in Alexandria.

While Morocco are alleged to be the "easy beats" in England's World Cup group, Robson warns: "Football among the Third World nations is improving because they are spending a lot of time and money on coaching and preparation.

"They train morning and afternoon — in fact they train more than British clubs — so they are bound to make progress.

"England are in for a hard match against Morocco in Mexico."



BOBBY ROBSON

AMPOL CUP QUARTER-FINALS

N.S.W. SOCCER FEDERATION

PRESENTS

Friday, February 21st at Marconi Stadium

Melita Eagles v Apia Leichhardt at 7.00pm
Sydney City v Sydney Croatia at 8.45pm

Sunday, February 23rd at St. George Stadium

Newcastle Rosebud v Inter Monaro
Marconi v Sydney Olympic

BE THERE TO CATCH THE ACTION LIVE!



N.S.W. SOCCER



LET'S SWITCH FROM SUNDAY FIXTURES

SAYS FRANK SCICLUNA

THE practice by Newcastle Rosebud of playing NSL matches on Saturday rather than the traditional Sunday is a totally logical one and Sydney clubs would do well to experiment along the same lines.



CROWD — puller John Kosmina.

There cannot be the slightest doubt that when well-supported teams such as Sydney Olympic, Sydney Croatia and to a lesser extent Marconi, Apia and even Melita Eagles (in State League) are all playing at the same time on the same day their attendances cannot possibly be maximised.

If, however, matches involving these teams were to be staggered to different days, fans would have every opportunity of attending more than one match on a weekend.

A close look at the 1986 fixture list in the NSL Northern Division shows that out of the six matches each week, four are played in Sydney with the other two in either Newcastle, Wollongong or Canberra.

In round 3, scheduled for Sunday April 13, there will be three attractive matches featuring six potential title challengers, Sydney City v Croatia, Sydney Olympic v St George and Marconi v Blacktown.

So outstanding players like John Kosmina, Joe Watson, Vedran Rozic, Graham Arnold, Chris Kalantzis, Tony Dakos, Robbie Slater, Terry Greedy and Peter Tredinick are all in action at the same time - but at different grounds.

These are important matches and should all be able to attract healthy attendances but fans are forced into a situation of having to select just one they could watch. How much more sensible would it be for Sydney City to play against Croatia on Saturday afternoon or night, or for that matter Friday night? They would be certain to attract a large number of Olympic supporters as well as

fans from other clubs playing on Sunday.

A number of Croatia fans would in turn be able to go to neighbouring Marconi Stadium the following day for Marconi's match against Blacktown.

This is all basic common sense. Would any sensible promoter stage a Dire Straits concert at precisely the same time that Bruce Springsteen was performing a few miles away?

Yet this is exactly the way we have been "promoting" our game.

A long-standing argument has been that Saturday afternoon matches cannot attract crowds because of work commitments and other sporting activities.

That may or may not be a valid argument. However, it is one that can be very easily countered. With St George, Marconi, Croatia and Melita all having facilities for night matches, what would be so wrong for APIA and Sydney City to play their matches at Barton Park, or Blacktown at Melita whenever the occasion warrants it?

We are blessed with relatively mild winter nights in this country but should the cold weather keep some fans away, the extra numbers that will attend are bound to surpass any attendance at a match which is competing with other attractive matches on the same afternoon.

If anyone doubts these arguments, just take a trip to the Marconi Stadium when Melita is not playing and observe the many Eagles fans in attendance.

Visit Barton Park when Olympic plays in Canberra or Newcastle and see the number of obvious Olympic supporters watching St George.

Whether we like to admit it or not, Soccer does not have thousands of fans to draw upon but what it has got is a substantial number of committed supporters who would attend any reasonably attractive match whenever possible.

Even Rugby League

with its much larger following, is staging a match on Monday night as well as Saturday and Sunday in an effort to maximise attendances.

Another fair point that should be given consideration is the hundreds of State League and Inter Suburban League players whose games are also played on Sunday afternoons.

At a rough count there are at least 200 teams in all grades consisting of a minimum 13 players and two officials each. We can also conservatively add an average of 20 friends and relatives attending each of these games.

A quick summing up will soon show that there are around 7000 more potential spectators for National League matches.

Assuming that only a quarter of these could be tempted to attend, we are looking at an extra 1750 people who at \$5 a head can add \$8750 a week to gate takings.

Multiply this by the 22 weeks of the season and we've got an additional \$192,000 coming into the game. Carry out the same exercise in Victoria and the NSL clubs could be nearly \$400,000 richer per season.

This would not only make the National League as proposed for 1987 that much more feasible, it would also make it less reliant on sponsorship.

No doubt one could be accused of using an oversimplistic argument. But it is obvious that the way NSL fixtures are scheduled by clubs desperate for extra income is not touching the potential that exists for maximising match attendances.



SPECTATORS flock to Sydney City v St George clashes.

MOHAMED IS OUT

MOHAMED TIMOUNI is rated the best player in Morocco — but he won't play in this year's African Cup.

Timouni has just recovered from a broken leg and is determined to be 100 per cent fit to play in the World Cup.

That's why he is bypassing the important African Nations Cup.

MIKE ROBINSON (right)

MIKE'S THE WHITE PELE

WHEN Mike Robinson scored a fantastic goal from 55 metres for QPR against Chelsea in the Milk Cup, his team-mates quickly dubbed him "the white Pele!"

That's because the video of Pele's shot from the halfway line in a 1970 World Cup match has been screened thousands of times in England.

Robinson joked: "Pele may be black but we have a lot in common. But my goal went in and Pele's was a near miss."

TV viewers can now expect interminable replays of Robinson's goal.



SUPER BRAZILIANS ARE INJURED

ALL those tipsters who reckon Brazil will win the World Cup may have to think again.

To win the Cup, Brazil will need to have 1982 Cup heroes, Zico, Falcao, Junior, Socrates, Eder and the rest all completely fit and in form.

That is asking a lot. For instance, Socrates and Zico are both nursing injuries which could keep them off the plane to Mexico.

And some of the other Brazilians who were so brilliant in Spain four years ago could be somewhat below their best this time.

Now the experts are asking... could a "nothing" nation like Mexico or Denmark carry off football's greatest trophy?

Believe it or not, Mexico and Denmark are the best-performed national sides in the world over the past year or so.



SOCRATES, Injured and doubtful prior to World Cup.

KNEE INJURY ENDS PETER SHARNE'S CAREER

AFTER MORE than a decade with the club, the familiar figure of Peter Sharne will no longer be seen wearing the green shirt of Marconi following the 29-year-old winger's decision to retire from Soccer.

BY FRANK SCICLUNA



PETER SHARNE in his hey-day with Marconi.

While this news will disappoint many fans, it is not entirely unexpected, as "Sharnie" had a long battle with injuries last year that kept him out of the game for the best part of the season.

With his injured knee still not yet healed he feels that it would not be fair to the club or himself to continue, and hanging up his boots was the only course.

Sharne was Marconi's longest-serving player, joining the club as a junior in 1973 and making his first team debut on Anzac Day, 1975, against Granville.

He went on to play 220 matches for the club, scoring 62 goals, including the club's first ever National League goal in 1977 and the 400th last year.

When Marconi brought the Australian championship to Fairfield in 1979, Sharne, together with Mark Jankovic and Eddie Krncevic, formed a deadly attacking trio that blitzed all opposition defences, scoring no fewer than 58 goals.

In 1977, Sharne made the first of 39 appearances for the national team, reaching his peak in 1980 when first against England during the Centenary

game, and again a few weeks later against Northern Ireland, he displayed form that prompted England coach Bobby Robson to try to take him to his club, Ipswich Town.

Sharne did not make the move to England. However, when the Eastern club in Hong Kong made a big bid for his services at the end of the 1981 season, he decided that the time was right for him to try his luck overseas.

The \$50,000 transfer deal saw him spend two highly successful years in Hong Kong and when he came back to Australia towards the end of 1983, he played out the season on loan to APIA.

His heart was, nevertheless, still with Marconi.

The club not being in a position to pay the required \$20,000 transfer fee for him, a group of supporters got together and raised the money for Sharne to return to Fairfield in time for the 1984 season.

Since then, Sharne has been plagued by one injury after another, which allowed him to show only occasional glimpses of his true form, hence his decision to bow out of the

game at a relatively early age.

After such a long and successful career, it was quite appropriate for Sharne to make his final appearance with Marconi in the grand final of 1985, 10 years after making his first appearance.

While one career comes to an end, another is on the verge of bursting onto the Soccer scene.

Nineteen-year-old keeper Paul Jones, who was signed by Marconi from the Australian Institute of Sport a few weeks ago, has settled in extremely well and is enjoying the challenge of playing for a National League club.

Jones has moved into a home unit at Fairfield and is working as a barman at Club Marconi. This allows him the perfect opportunity of combining both jobs and he relishes the training sessions under coach Les Scheinflug.

Jones makes no secret of the fact that Scheinflug was the major reason for his coming to Marconi in preference to a number of other clubs. He couldn't be happier with the treatment he has received so far.

The West Australian youngster accepts that Bruce James is the team's number one goalkeeper and has set himself a target of winning over the position within two years.

With his girl friend moving to Sydney from Canberra this month and a wedding date set for November, Jones looks set for a long career at Marconi. This could lead to senior international honours to add to his eight appearances for the national youth team, including last year's World Youth Championship in Russia.

SHARNEY weaving his magic for Eastern in Hong Kong during a very successful two-year stint there, and in action for APIA (below).



Peter Sharne

PART ONE OF THE SHARNE SERIES



RETURN FAVOUR

ALAN VEST's Under 19 NSW squad will meet the Penrith City side coached by Vic Dalglish tomorrow night.

The venue is Cook Park Penrith and the match will commence at 7.30pm.

Vic Dalglish claims, "Our team will be at full strength and playing the game is the least I could do to aid Alan's preparation."

"Last year prior to departing for China with my Under 16 national squad he helped by arranging a match between my boys and his U16's state squad."

RANGERS WIN 1ST LEG

TERRY FENWICK gave Queen's Park Rangers a fighting chance of reaching the Football League Cup final at Wembley when he scored the decisive goal in the semi-final first leg match against Liverpool.

The England midfielder's 24th minute goal on Rangers' artificial Loftus Road pitch provided a vital 1-0 advantage over cup specialist Liverpool, but with the second leg to come at Anfield in three weeks time, Rangers could have hoped for more.



SHARNE on the ball for Australia.



PLAYERS WANTED

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Training sessions are held every Tuesday and Thursday nights at:

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Garry Redding ☎ 662 6348

Paul Tallana ☎ 667 2941

JOHN STEWART SEEKS A SOCCEROO SPOT

BY GREG RUSSELL

GIVEN the choice between running the midfield and scoring goals, a player's ego could prompt him to make the obvious decision.

Goals generate headlines, work-rate often gains only admiration.

Why then does Brisbane Lions' leading scorer last season, John Stewart, want to move from the forward line into the engine room?

The reason is that Stewart is not just another player.

The Queensland captain and Australian Soccer Press Association (Q'ld Branch) Player of the Year is an exceptional talent and fiercely determined.

He wants to wear the Australian green and gold — desperately. Stewart, who scored five goals in a dozen games when moved to striker in the Lions' NSL team last year, has never been afraid of work.

In the midfield he believes he can run, tackle, chase and power his way into Frank Arok's national squad.

"There are plenty of young strikers in contention for the national squad, but I think places are there in the midfield," Stewart said.

"I want to play for Australia. I am sure I can do a job for Frank Arok in the midfield. I agreed to move up front last year because it was in the best interests of the team. But that situation no longer exists as Danny Wright and Joe Cairney are back from injury.

"The midfield is where I am most comfortable and despite my goals up

front last year I think it is where the team best benefits from me," he said.

Stewart does not hide the fact that he was bitterly disappointed he wasn't given a chance during the Socceroos' World Cup campaign. Being of Scottish parentage, it would have been the greatest moment of his life to wear the green and gold against Scotland.

Queensland's interstate match loss to NSW, in which Stewart was largely a lone battler in the maroon midfield, almost certainly put paid to those dreams.

Still, despite being only as close to the World Cup campaign as the television screen, Stewart admires what Arok and his team achieved.

That is in the past. The future is the Seoul Olympics and a new-look Australian team.

"The next World Cup is four years away. The Olympic tournament is my last chance," Stewart admits.

At 26, Stewart is not one of the young brigade. But he certainly isn't over the hill for our next international campaign and can offer a stability and maturity hard to find in any other midfielders.

His footballing career has been through the school of hard knocks.

As a junior, he played in one of the most successful teams in Queensland Soccer history.

His Mount Gravatt side, coached from under 7's by his father, Adam, was for years undefeated.

The team provided the bulk of State representative teams and won more championships and grand finals than he can remember.

But unlike the opportunities which opened for his younger brother Russell, once junior football finished there was not a lot for which John could aim.

By 1975, the 17-year-old Stewart already had been playing in his club's first team for three years.

There was nothing else to do as in those days there were no Young Socceroos, no National League and the Queensland Soccer scene offered little other than a place in the dominating Azzurri or Hollandia teams.

Stewart opted to go to England for a trial — a massive step-up and indeed much more of a gamble than nowadays when British scouts are starting to awaken to the untapped resources of Australian Soccer.

Stewart gained a trial at Bristol City, then in the second division, but was tried as a central defender. For 10 years he had played as central striker.

It never worked out and before he knew it, Stewart was on the outer.

"I went over there with the wrong attitude. I held everything in awe. If I knew then what I do now and had the same confidence it might have been a bit different," he said.

But Stewart failed to give in. He eventually won a place in the Cheltenham Town team playing in the Southern Premier League and went on to have several successful seasons before switching to Cinderford in the Midland Combination, where he also played with success as a striker.

After six years abroad, during which he met and married his wife Celia, Stewart returned home, only to find many had forgotten his achievements with Mount Gravatt and the spotlight was very much on his Young Socceroo kid brother.

In fact, in the following few years he was to be repeatedly mixed up with Russell, even to the extent that the Australian Soccer Federation got them confused.

But through big-hearted performances on the field, and a common-sense and professional approach off the park, Stewart has gained the respect of most — and a reputation of his own.

But ever a team man, he pushes into the background his personal achievements in recent seasons and talks eagerly of Lions' success this season.

"We might have been a little over-confident last year after making the finals the previous season. But this time we know what we have to do, everyone has to improve and we certainly have got to put away the goals.

"We have got the players at Lions to compete with the best. Everyone just has to do his job," he

said. Now that Lions have agreed to let Stewart do

the job he knows best, guiding operations in midfield, perhaps the ultimate

reward for both him and the team is just around the corner.



QUEENSLAND Captain John Stewart — desperate for the green & gold.

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Star Profile

BY JOHN ECONOMOS



No.4



GRAHAM ARNOLD

GRAHAM ARNOLD, Sydney Croatia's 22 year old goalscoring target man, has signed again with his club, despite valiant attempts by St George to attract him to make a switch.

This will be Arnold's third season with Sydney Croatia, having originally come from Canterbury Marrickville Olympic.

At one stage earlier on, it seemed that Graham was destined to go to Sydney Olympic.

Last year, Arnold built up a magnificent understanding with newly signed attacking midfielder, Jimmy Patikas.

Born on August 3, 1963, Graham's consistent goalscoring efforts soon won him selection in Australia's World Cup squad.

But with David Mitchell and captain, John Kosmina established and playing well up front for Australia, Arnold found it difficult to bust through into the first XI.

However, in matches that he was brought on as a substitute, Graham almost always managed to score in the few minutes that he was on the pitch.

Graham also is very willing to compliment another of his club team-mates, Zarko Odzakov, also a national squad member.

"You have to play in the same team with Zarko to be able to understand his quality and experience.

"As a playmaker, Zarko makes the game seem so easy to play and he together with Vedran are the 'architects' in our side.

"We will however miss Jimmy Patikas' pace in attack this year," Arnold lamented.

Tall, endowed with skills, and a no-nonsense man, Graham is a 'one-touch' player which makes him most dangerous in the box.

BORN: 3.8.63.

BIRTHPLACE: Caringbah, Sydney.

OCCUPATION: Carpenter.

PLAYING POSITION: Striker.

WHICH CLUBS DO YOU EXPECT TO DO WELL IN THE 1986 NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE: "Sydney Croatia, Marconi, Sydney City and Olympic."

HOW WILL YOUR CLUB GO AND WHY: "Losing Jimmy Patikas will be a big blow to us.

"We now have to make sure we put it all together to do well as this is an important season for next year's revised NSL format."

WHICH PLAYERS WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN YOUR TEAM: "David Ratcliffe, Robbie Dunn, Robbie Slater and Oscar Crino."

WHO ARE YOUR FAVOURITE NSL PLAYERS: "Zarko Odzakov, Vederan Rozic and David Ratcliffe."

WHICH OTHER TEAM WOULD YOU LIKE TO PLAY FOR OTHER THAN THE ONE YOU ARE WITH NOW AND WHY: "St George. They have a real good professional set-up with a nice social club and a top stadium."

WHAT ARE YOUR AMBITIONS FOR YOUR FUTURE OTHER THAN SOCCER: "To live a long healthy and happy life and to try to put something back into the game when I retire."

DO YOU THINK THE MONEY PLAYERS EARN IN AUSTRALIAN SOCCER IS FAIR: "Yes because they deserve it.

"Most players have a fulltime job as well and at the end of the day race off to attend training sessions.

"But it does not stop there. There are great sacrifices made to their social life."

OTHER GENERAL THOUGHTS ON AUSTRALIAN SOCCER: "The publicity and credibility generated by the National side in the recent World Cup matches should go a long way to boosting interest in the NSL this year."

WHO WILL WIN THE 1986 WORLD CUP AND WHY: "Argentina I think. Firstly because they are a South American country and secondly because they will have the individual brilliance of Maradona in their side."



Star Profile

BY JOHN ECONOMOS



No.5



ROBBIE SLATER

ROBBIE SLATER, Blacktown City's newly signed flanker, at 21, has developed into a mature and, despite his age, experienced player.

Robbie first made his debut in the senior ranks four years ago with St George BSC.

As well, he has had two periods with England's Nottingham Forest to greatly expand his Soccer experience, on a fulltime basis.

Born on 22.11.64, in Liverpool, England, (what an address!) Robbie migrated as a child with his parents to Australia.

As he grew older, Robbie always had the burning ambition to return back 'home' to try to make it into the big-time of Soccer.

So late last year, with his boots packed, Robbie headed back to Forest with some considerable success scoring heaps of goals in the reserves.

But this time the young, ambitious Aussie, ran into club financial problems.

Forest, like most clubs in England, are going through an economic crisis.

When eventually Slater arrived back, Blacktown's desires for the winger intensified till finally they made him an offer, just too good to refuse.

So the Saints lost Slater for a transfer fee of \$15,000.

Just as sunlight was about to appear for Robbie, his immediate future is now in doubt as his left knee cap has developed a growth or 'roughage'.

Slater's new career with Blacktown will have to be delayed for a few weeks while he receives treatment to his injury.

BORN: 22.11.64.

BIRTHPLACE: Liverpool, England.

OCCUPATION: Fulltime player.

PLAYING POSITION: Flank-striker.

WHICH CLUBS DO YOU EXPECT TO DO WELL IN THE 1986 NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE: "Marconi, mainly because they will be stronger in all departments this year.

"They are basically a young, yet experienced side with plenty of skills all round."

HOW WILL YOUR CLUB GO AND WHY: "Blacktown City I think, will be pushing hard this year for a Top Five spot.

"They have made some good purchases during the off-season and Casey De Bruin is a top coach."

WHICH PLAYERS WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN YOUR TEAM: "David Ratcliffe, Terry Greedy and Oscar Crino."

WHO ARE YOUR FAVOURITE NSL PLAYERS: "Greedy and Ratcliffe."

WHICH OTHER TEAM WOULD YOU LIKE TO PLAY FOR OTHER THAN THE ONE YOU ARE WITH NOW AND WHY: "St George. They are a good club with good management."

WHAT ARE YOUR AMBITIONS FOR YOUR FUTURE OTHER THAN SOCCER: "When I've finished playing Soccer, to set up my own business somewhere and be independent as well as happy."

DO YOU THINK THE MONEY PLAYERS EARN IN AUSTRALIAN SOCCER IS FAIR: "On the average, no.

"They put in a lot of energy and time and make many sacrifices, as well as having to go to work during the day.

"To a large extent, a player's social life also suffers."

OTHER GENERAL THOUGHTS ON AUSTRALIAN SOCCER: "I think that the overall standard in the NSL, from say six years back, has definitely gone down.

"And this has happened, despite the high levels that were achieved recently by the Australian team in the World Cup."

WHO WILL WIN THE 1986 WORLD CUP AND WHY: "England I hope. But realistically speaking, a South American country has to be favoured at this stage, say Brazil."

BRUSASCO DRAWS THE LINE — AGAIN!

THE controversial "Brusasco Line" will again be used by the Queensland Soccer Federation in its XXXX pre-season tournament which starts in Brisbane this week.

The no offside — no pass-back line, drawn 25m out from the goal line in each half, proved an outstanding success when first tried in last year's tournament and QSF officials had no hesitation in playing the same rules this season.

Last year the 18 qualifying matches produced 74 goals, an average of four a match. The total was 14 more goals than the 1984 pre-season tournament which was played under normal FIFA rules.

QSF president Ian Brusasco, who pioneered the rule exchange in an experiment to produce more entertaining Soccer, says the figures speak for themselves.

"Naturally anything new takes a while to get used to but after one or two games I couldn't recall any players or coaches complaining, I think with last season's experiences under their belts, players will adapt even quicker this season and I would expect just as many goals and even more entertaining Soccer to be a feature of this year's tournament," Brusasco said.

Incentives for teams to win this year are also more attractive.

Thanks to Castlemaine Perkins' increased sponsorship of Queensland Soccer, the pre-season tournament now carries \$7000 — with \$5000 going to the winner. Last year's pre-season champions, Lions, collected \$3000.

Although Lions will embark on a 10-day North Queensland tour during the XXXX tournament, the club still has entered and expects to field many of its NSL players as the draw enables Lions to play a match before it departs and two when it returns.

But it is expected many of the Lions' premier league players also will be used.

Lions are in Group C with premier league clubs Grange Thistle and Coalstars and Intermediate league club Rochedale. With an NSL-strength team Lions would be hot favourites to reach the semi-finals as a group winner, but should be able to go through anyway with its premier league team, grand finalists last year.

Other groups are: Group A — Brisbane City, North Star, Taringa and Wynnum; Group B — Ipswich United, Mount Gravatt, Easts and Olym-

pic United.

The group winners along with the best runner-up from the three groups will be the semi-finalists.

Brisbane City should win its group, although

North Star were last year's Ampol Cup winners and could cause an upset and at least grab the best runner-up spot.

On past results, Ipswich United should take Group B, although the old rivals

Mount Gravatt will be tough to beat.

The tournament starts on Wednesday and continues for the next month on Wednesday and Friday nights and Sunday afternoons.



KIM WISHART, facing stern task to keep out Bobby Cox.

With Greg Russell

ROBERTO COMES GOOD AT LAST

WATCH out for Roberto Lettieri this season — that's the warning from Brisbane City coach Jim Hermiston.

And already the Argentine import is living up to Hermiston's predictions.

In the Lions \$5000 World Wide Insulation Silver Boot pre-season tournament, Lettieri has been showing all the skills he only flashed last season.

Hermiston has switched the skilful South American to a libero midfield role. And Lettieri is relishing being on the ball.

Last season after a much-heralded transfer from Porto Alegre, Lettieri played only a handful of NSL games, mostly on the left wing. The new surrounds, the unfamiliarity which his team-mates and the crude style of some NSL opponents left him floundering.

He looked yet another dud Brisbane City overseas signing!

But in just a few games so far this season, Lettieri has been a real playmaker for City. His team-mates are aware of the flicks and delicate chips over the defence and have begun playing off Lettieri rather than with, or to, him.

"I've been very pleased with his attitude and work at training. Things are a lot different from last year," Hermiston said.

Although Hermiston has used the Silver Boot competition to experiment and trial players, already the City team is taking shape. Central defence could e youngsters Mike Cernaka and Frank Mengotti.

Cernaka, on the books of premier league club Olympic United, is looking strong and determined while Mengotti has come on in leaps and bounds in the past 12 months and displayed clever anticipation in several Silver Boot games.

Another youngster Glenn Archer looks like holding down the right-back position while Garry Bromfield is certain to be left-back.

Regular goalkeeper Kim Wishart faces a tough task to keep Bobby Cox out while in midfield, Lettieri's partners probably will be Steve Hogg and Bobby Hamilton.

Hogg is slowly getting back to his tough-tackling form and looks much more aggressive on the ball than in the past. Hamilton seems to get broader shouldered as each season passes and is tireless in his midfield tunnelling.

He looms as the player probably hardest to replace in the team.

Up front, Luciano Fabrizio is as keen as ever but trialist Phil Whyte is yet to show anything out of the box. City are still awaiting the arrival of Irishman Kieran Cooper to spearhead the attack.

With last year's first teamers Alan Reis, Mike Milovanovic and Lee Scriggins to be placed somewhere, the competition for places looks healthier than it has been for years at City.

Apart from providing valuable NSL preparation for City, the Silver Boot competition has again been an outstanding success for all involved. Most clubs have been able to gain a valuable early season assessment of their squads.

The Lions' NSL team has been the most free-scoring in the early rounds, slamming six past Wynnum and seven past Easts. The Lions premier league team suffered a shock 0-2 loss to Mount Gravatt but bounced back to slam a strong-looking Rochedale 7-1... a result which no doubt stunned Rovers coach Col Bennett who fielded his new signing Kevin Coleman, the former Ipswich United and Sydney Croatia players.

Amateur Taringa scored a draw with North Star and downed a lacklustre Olympic 3-1 while Coalstars were unlucky in losing 2-3 to City, conceding the third goal in the final minute.

The Silver Boot semi-finals are on this Wednesday (February 19) while the finals are on Sunday (February 23).

STOWELL JUNIOR KEEN TO PLAY NATIONAL LEAGUE

ANDREW STOWELL, the son of former Pan Hellenic Rothmans Medal winner Bruce Stowell, the Australian Under 16 and Queensland coach, could make his National League debut this season.

The 22-year-old former Gosford player is training with Brisbane Lions and is hoping to win the spot left by National Under 21 player of the year, stopper Alan Hunter, who has transferred to Heidelberg.

Stowell has looked extremely sharp in training, which is surprising considering he has not kicked a ball for more than 12 months, and certainly has the aggression needed for a central defender.

Bradford-born Stowell who played for Yorkshire juniors before coming to Australia with his parents, has spent the past year touring Australia.

But he says he wants to settle in Brisbane now and is very keen to play football again.

"I guess I missed my football while I was travelling around and I am very keen to get involved again," Stowell said.

Stowell said he chose Lions ahead of City after watching the two clubs compete in the Silver Boot pre-season tournament.



FRANK LIDDELL, playing for St.Johnstone.

ment now in progress at Richlands.

"They look an enthusiastic young side," he said.

Whether his father had any influence on his decision is not known, but 10 of Bruce Stowell's 16 State team players last season were from Lions.

With class stoppers a rare commodity in Brisbane at the moment, if Stowell junior can force his way into the Lions' NSL team — then he could well become the club's next maroon.

But at this stage Andrew prefers to concentrate on just regaining his fitness and winning a regular place at Richlands, rather than ponder on the thought of playing under his father for Queensland against New South Wales.

If Stowell makes the grade he will ease the anxiety at Lions over replacing Hunter.

Although Norm Bell looms as the immediate replacement, there is concern that the genial former Acacia Ridge player

lacks the ruthlessness of a bruising NSL stopper.



ALAN HUNTER, has left Lions and Stowell wants his place.

It was not surprising then that Lions directors were more than interested to hear Brisbane City had given a free transfer to their former stopper Frank Liddell, now player-coach for St Johnstone reserves in Scotland.

Liddell still keeps in regular contact with Lions player Joe Cairney and it would not surprise to see the former Brisbane City and Queensland stopper back in Australia for another season.

FERGIE'S PRIVATE ARMY



BY TOM MCKAIN

WHILE the Socceroos were dumped out of the Mexico World Cup finals, we can still have an interest in seeing how far their conquerors, Scotland, go and how they tackle the job.

After a 1-0 win in Israel recently, manager Alex Ferguson was granted his own staff — nine top men will back him in the Mexico campaign.

And one of the key figures will be Andy Roxburgh, Scotland's Director of Coaching who will do a similar spying job to the one he did last year in Sydney and Tel Aviv.

His main task will be to prepare dossiers and video tapes of the teams in Scotland's group — Uruguay, Denmark and West Germany.

The other key men, dubbed "Fergie's Private Army" by the Scottish Press, are:

- Walter Smith. Coach and Fergie's right hand man on and off the bench.

- Archie Knox. Another manager whose job will be to watch the teams in Group D — Spain, Algeria, Brazil and Northern Ireland. It is from this group that Scotland's next opponents will come — if Fergie's boys make it through the first round.

- Craig Brown. Yet another manager who will be charting the progress of the Group E sides — Morocco, Poland, Portugal and England.

- Stuart Hillis. The Scottish Football Association doctor who has supervised the players' blood tests and cardiographs and will be the judge of how players are reacting to Mexico's high altitude.

- Brian Scott. The physiotherapist will lug around \$20,000 of equipment to treat strains and bruises.

- Hugh Alan. Another physio and the man who

will take to the field if a Scot goes down and doesn't get up immediately. He is regarded as the man with the "magic sponge" and is also in charge of the players' warm-ups.

- Jimmy Steel. He's the team's masseur, and also has the important job of checking kitchens, food and making sure every player gets what he wants.

- Teddy Scott. Another masseur and a new boy who will ease the burden on Steel's shoulders.

It is no secret that the altitude is going to suit the South American teams.

Ferguson has reasoned that the climate will hit players differently and he plans to split them into groups.

Each group leader — Ferguson, Hillis, Allan, Steel and Scott will monitor the progress of each player until they all reach the same level of fitness.

The Scots will prepare for battle in Santa Fe before heading for Mexico.



FERGIE'S PRIVATE ARMY will certainly aid striker FRANK McAVENNIE.

LAST LINK BROKEN AS NATCH QUIT

BY PHIL MURPHY

GOALKEEPER Natch Vardareff's decision to quit Wollongong City has become a milestone in the club's history.

Vardareff has decided to call it a day, leaving Warwick Young and Sean Billington to battle for the first team spot this season.

Now he is gone the club doesn't have anyone who was in the squad when they played their first NSL match against Sydney

Olympic back in 1981.

Peter Willis, another "original" departed for Blacktown only weeks before Vardareff left the Wolves.

Full-back Jock Morland was with Ken Morton's original squad but he has since had two seasons with Fairy Meadow.

Vardareff told ASW he has become disillusioned with NSL football and wants to spend more time with his family.

Wolves' coach John Fleming said Vardareff would have had to show a big improvement to figure in his team plans for the new season.

"We know he was a good keeper when he went into the League but he needed to show more dedication," Fleming said.

"He would have been struggling to get into the

top side here this season." Vardareff said he may be lured back to play with an Illawarra club this year, and already his phone has been busy.

At least two premier league clubs are keen to sign him and they are talking big money. To make it even more interesting, a first division coach has promised to better whatever the premier league outfits come up with.

Vardareff said he no longer has the same enthu-

siasm for the game and will probably have a break away from Soccer.

"I will spend a bit more time with my family but I might play with an Illawarra club next season," he said.

"I'm still only 29 and that's young for a goalkeeper."



SCOTLAND's Director of Coaching, Andy Roxburgh on a spying mission for Manager Alex Ferguson. Roxburgh has the important task of analysing and reporting to Ferguson on Scotland's opponents in the coming World Cup in Mexico.



GRAEME SOUNESS, has a grand job ahead in leading the Scottish team in Mexico, attempting to erase the memories of past failures in the World Cup Finals.



WOLLONGONG ACTION — No one remains from their initial NSL squad.

SENSIBLE DECISION

AUSTRALIA flatly rejected the concept of summer Soccer a few years ago after it had been proposed by marketing people.

That remains one of the most sensible decisions the game has ever made.

Soccer in summer in this country makes as much sense as cricket in England in January. It is a monstrous idea.

But what is happening in Sydney now? The long-suffering fans have actually had summer Soccer inflicted on them in the present Ampol Cup. What a crafty way of doing it. At recent Sunday games, it has been about 38 degrees and in that sort of weather the only sport that should be contested is swimming.

The president of the NSW Soccer Federation has promised there will be changes in the set-up next year.

He is a wise man. I hope he sticks by his word. I do not know anyone who wants Soccer in January and February, except a few club treasurers who imagine they will pick up extra revenue with the early start.

I hope ASW keeps up its campaign for the end of summer Soccer. Only by harnessing public opinion will much-needed changes be made.

Nom-de-plume "Sweaty Sammy."

ED — You are right. It's enough to make your blood boil.

SAD SUCCESS

ALTHOUGH it is marvellous to hear that an Aussie called Jimmy Patikas is making the grade with a top Greek club, it is also something which should make us all sad.

It has been proved in the past few years that any player of real class produced in Australia is going to be a target for wealthy foreign professional clubs.

So many of them have left these shores and, whatever promises are made about these players being released to play for Australia, such promises are often meaningless. We know that Tony Dorrigio and Andrew Bernal cannot afford to desert their European masters to wear the green and gold . . . and there are others too in the same boat.

The biggest worry facing Australian Soccer is the almost certain departure of all our best players to earn good money overseas.

We hear nothing from the rulers of the game here about what they are doing to ease those worries.

Could it be that the ASF is not concerned? Could it be that the headache is too difficult for them to solve? Or is it possible that Frank Arok, Sir Arthur George, Sam Papasavas and others who control the sport in Australia, have some master plan up their sleeves to stop the talent exodus?

There is only one thing that will keep our stars at home - money. And lots of it.

Let us heed the lesson of the Jim Patikas defection. We must do something before half a dozen other bright jewels of Soccer talent quit for foreign fields.

**Michael Mazouris,
Dulwich Hill.**

ED — There is nothing I can add. This is one of the most sensible letters we have received.

ARNOLD FOR AUSTRALIA

I think it's about time Graham Arnold gets a fair go in the Australian team.

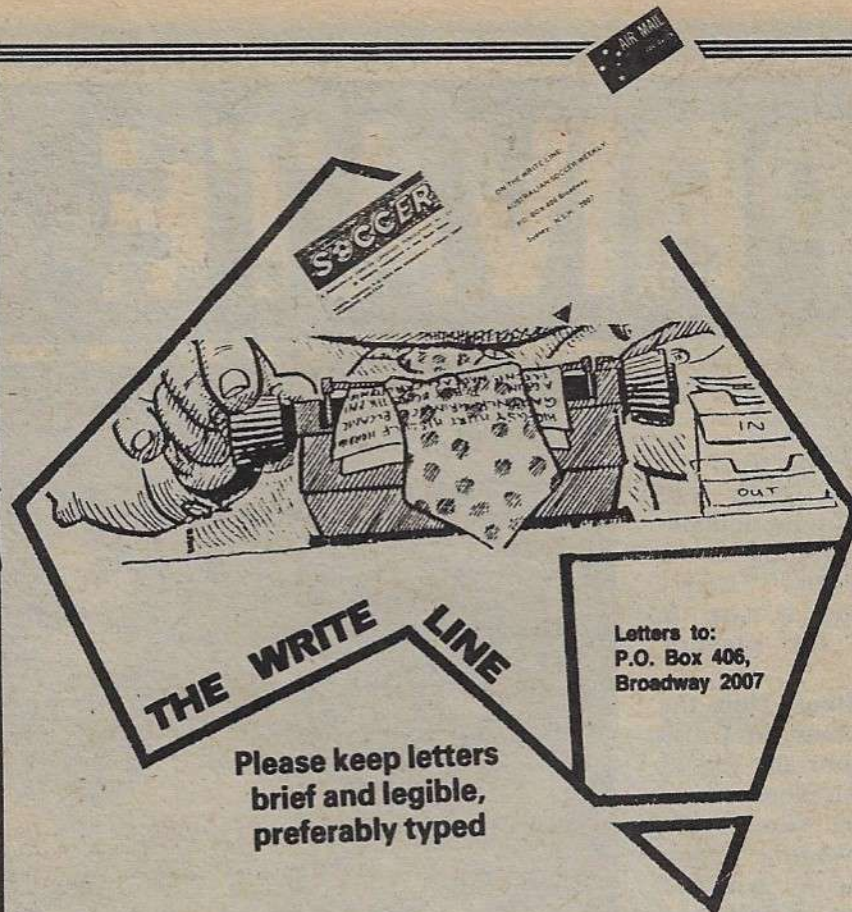
Although Kosmina and Mitchell especially have done well, the man for us is Arnold. I'd bring him in, in place of Kosmina.

**Stuart Close,
Cremorne, Tasmania.**

ED — You always judge a striker in international teams by whether or not he has a good partnership with his front-running partner.

Kosmina and Mitchell have struck a super understanding even if Kossie has on occasions performed below expectations.

But that's not to say Arnold doesn't deserve a real chance, he is young and has plenty of time. He'll more than likely be the successor to Kosmina. Then we must assume one of the Marconi duo of Brown and Lowe must break through sooner or later so it's going to be interesting.



BACK OFF OUR OFFICIALS

I am sick and tired of Australian referees being criticised for some bad decisions.

When will people realise that the refs here compared to other officials in Oceania at least, if not the world, are the best. Get off their backs.

**David Williams,
Erina Heights, NSW.**

ED — I have always tried to lean towards the side of referees because I believe they have a most difficult and thankless task. Sure, some of them make glaring errors but nobody's perfect.

GREAT START BY BATTLERS

ALTHOUGH it is only early stages in the 1986 season, the real battlers of the National League have had a great start to their campaign.

Undefeated in their four Ampol Cup matches they have shown despite everybody putting them down that they are in their own right a very capable outfit.

Who else could beat Sydney Olympic and draw with St.George, two so-called 'top-line' clubs in the National competition.

The best part of their success is that they are doing it with skill and teamwork and for such an inexperienced side this is very commendable.

**J.Donaldson,
Edgeworth, N.N.S.W.**

ED — Your letter would make more sense if you told us which team you were wringing about. But we must guess it's Newcastle Rosebud. Full marks to Newcastle for their great start. Let's hope they can keep it up.

BRUNSWICK BOO-BOO

BRUNSWICK JUVENTUS were on a good thing with John Margaritis in charge but they really dropped a clanger in letting him go.

Any coach who takes his side to the national title should be held on to at all costs. Sometimes clubs think too much about the players and not enough about the man in charge.

**George Talore,
Cranbourne, Vic**

ED — Margaritis did a great job last season to get his side into the finals let alone take the title, but Margaritis was more than ready to leave. So if you have a coach who wants to leave there is no point in forcing him to stay.

I don't envy his successor, Len McKendry because he has walked into a club that now expects to be at the top all the time.

In his favour, he is one of the game's winningest coaches.

JOHNSTON CRAZY!

CRAIG JOHNSTON has obviously got rocks in his head to want to play for a British nation.

That he doesn't show any inclination to want to represent his country is bad enough but to then go ahead and seek British citizenship to give him the liberty of being possibly selected by no less than four countries is ludicrous to say the least. Talk about prostitution!

The same can be said of Tony Dorigo and Andrew Bernal - they should be ashamed of themselves!

**R.Fengan,
Enfield, NSW**

ED — Well everyone is allowed his own opinion. Sure Johnston was not completely blameless for not going on to represent Australia and go for British representation but the ASF is to blame for not selecting him.

TIP FOR THE TOP

O.K. ED it's time you stuck your neck out and made a prediction for this year's NSL title.

Who is going to be the champion and who will get the chop?

**P.Bannister,
Glenbrook, NSW**

ED — It is a bit early and I'd rather reserve my views until I have had a good look at all the teams. As for the Northern Division I think Marconi, Sydney City and Sydney Croatia will practically have it between them again with Inter Monaro, St.George and Sydney Olympic just behind.

WOMEN'S SOCCER NEEDS HELP

As an interested party in Women's Soccer, I am greatly disturbed at the standard of administration of our national side.

I find it appalling to hear that our girls, who "pay to play," who train hard to wear the green and gold, are still wearing the strips that were worn some half a dozen years ago.

Surely these athletes deserve better.

Every January the administrative body of Women's Soccer spends hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars flying members of its committee, from interstate, to attend a WEEKEND meeting in Sydney!

Yet this same body of administrators refuse flatly to try and raise \$1500 to supply the pride of the code, namely the national team, with all they deserve — a quality strip and tracksuit.

Perhaps a travelling outfit that makes them look like ladies!

A momento like this as a reward for their efforts is only equal to the standards of most other sporting codes.

Why should our girls be anything but first-rate? It would bring nothing less than national pride.

As someone who would like to see the code progress to the heights of such games as Netball, Basketball and Cricket, I am shocked to hear of recent events involving the AWSA.

As the ruling body of Women's Soccer I would have thought first priority would be to promote the game and administer it as professionally as possible.

This is not being done!

With the recent resignation of, the newly-appointed executive director, the opportunity presented itself to receive some invaluable advice from one of the best sources in the country.

That is, the lady directly involved with achieving the current status held by sports such as Netball, Women's Cricket and Basketball.

The AWSA, in all its wisdom, would not even listen to her speak.

Please tell me who is running this show.

It's time Women's Soccer had top administrators.

The sport has suffered long enough!

"Interested Party"

THE WOMENS SOCCER SCENE

KIWI CAPTAIN NOW COACH

BY JOHN ECONOMOS

NEW ZEALAND's Oceania Cup squad has been selected by manager and sole-selector, Mr Roy Cox, and already they have completed two training camps to date in Auckland.

The Kiwi squad of sponsored by New Zealand's "Radio 1", once again includes probably two of the very best players the New Zealanders have ever produced.

Barbara Cox, 38, the blonde super-fit mother of three, centre-back, and the powerful goalscoring midfielder, Maureen Jacobson.

UNIQUE ACHIEVEMENT

Barbara Cox, New

met, was in Taiwan, late 1984 at the "World Women's Invitational Football Tournament".

In Taiwan, she easily shone above many players not half her age.

Not only has Barbara been a class, consistent servant for the Kiwis on the pitch, but last month, became the very first ever woman player in New Zealand to gain the N.Z.F.A. Senior Coaching Badge.

A wonderful credit to

National Kiwis to victory in the Asian Cup played in Hong Kong.

To date, the ever-green Barbara has gained 23 international caps, a total which she could easily have increased but for a break in her playing career.

In 1982, she had the misfortune to have suffered a broken hip-bone playing against Chinese-Taipei.

"I thoroughly enjoyed the coaching course which was very demanding, both physically and mentally.

"You not only learn as a player and coach, but there is also the camaraderie of the fellow participants on the course," Barbara stated.

And helping Barbara next month to win New Zealand's second Oceania Cup, will be the powerful shooting midfielder, Maureen Jacobson.

In fact it was Maureen who sunk Australia in the first Oceania Cup in the Final in 1983.

Late in the second half, the big robust midfielder planted a rocketing 35 metre 'bomb' to give the Kiwis the match 3-2 and take the Cup back to Auckland.

As we stated last week, New Zealand's ace-goalkeeper, Angela Hall, will miss the Oceania Cup due to a spinal injury that urgently required surgery.

Helen O'Connor, 22, has been drafted in by Cox to fill Angela's place.

her, her family and the New Zealand code of Women's Soccer.

Barbara who also captains the Mount Wellington and Auckland teams, began her Soccer career 13 years ago, playing with Eden Saints.

Two years later, Barbara Cox skipped the

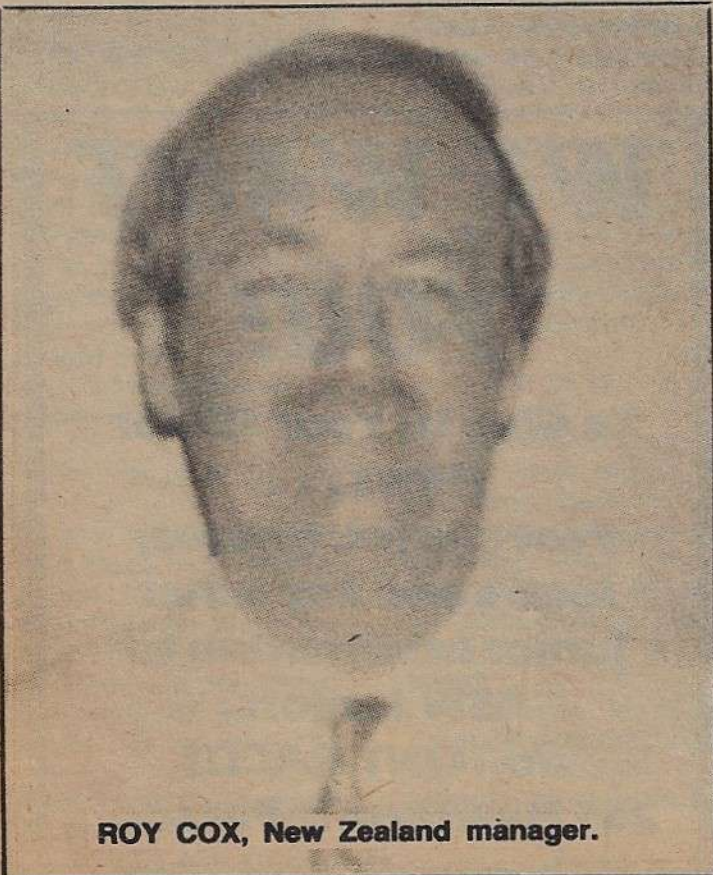


BARBARA COX

Zealand's captain of recent years, has always been a super-fit and highly competitive player, equally comfortable at sweeper as she is as a midfielder.

I first met Barbara Cox in 1983 in Noumea, New Caledonia at the first Oceania Cup tournament.

The second occasion we



ROY COX, New Zealand manager.

COX ANNOUNCES NEW ZEALAND SQUAD FOR CUP

ROY COX, New Zealand's manager, has cut his training squad down to the final 16 names that will face Australia next month in Christchurch for the Oceania Cup.

Captain of the side, again, will be the ever-green, Barbara Cox from Auckland.

BY JOHN ECONOMOS

New Zealand who won the first Oceania Cup back in 1983 in Noumea, New Caledonia, will be determined to thwart the Australian assault.

But New Zealand will in fact field two teams to prop up the Cup, following Papua New Guinea's withdrawal from the tournament.

New Guinea, as I expected, pulled out of the tournament for economic reasons.

The New Zealand sides will be coached again by Cox's assistant, Sandy Davie.

Captaining the New Zealand B side, will be Kathy Hall who narrowly missed selection in the A squad.



MAUREEN
JACOBSON

The two N.Z. National squads have already attended three training camps in preparation for the Cup Tournament, and to date, all has gone extremely well for the Kiwis.

With a wealth of experienced and physically strong players, the New Zealanders must be rated favourites at the moment to retain the Oceania Cup.

Anne Smith should be the first team goalkeeper, with Helen O'Connor coming into the side as the B team's custodian.

Pleasing Cox, was the great fight-back shown by Andrea Crowther who had been sidelined over the last three years, following a broken leg.

Andrea broke her leg in two places after colliding heavily with national goalkeeper, the powerful Angela Hall.

Back to full strength will be the experienced Maureen Jacobson, Alison Grant and Donna Baker.

All three players who toured China-Taipei in December 1984, have been plagued by injuries over recent months.

But according to Cox, all three players are now fully fit and training freely.



MARIA GEORGE

FUTURE IN MIND

THE Kiwis have taken an intelligent step in fielding a B side in the Cup Tournament.

This will enable opportunities to many A-team fringe players to force their way into the senior national side.

The N.Z.W.F.A. has obviously done this with the first Women's World Cup in mind coming up in 1988.



WENDY SHARPE

STAR LEFT-BACK

One particular exciting potential international in the Kiwis' B side, is left-back, Cinnamon Chaney.



DONNA MARIE
BAKER

Chaney, from the Wellington club, (according to experts), should develop within two years into New Zealand's best-ever left-defender, ready for the first World Cup.



ALISON GRANT

N.Z.'s A-Team

Barbara Cox (capt), Viv Robertson (vice-capt), Anne Smith, Jo Nicholson, Lyn Pedruco, Lorinda Panther, Audrey Allen, Julie Inglis, Maureen Jacobson, Alison Grant, Jo Graat, Wendy Sharpe, Debbie Pullen, Donna Baker, Pauline Sullivan, Andrea (Meikle) Crowther.



MICHELLE JOY
DE BRUYN

Manager: Roy Cox.
Coach: Sandy Davie.
Tour Leader: Jenny Lee.
Physiotherapist:
Barbara Saipie.

N.Z.'s B-Team

Kathy Hall (capt), Helen O'Connor, Char MacIntosh, Michelle De Bruyn, Cinnamon Chaney, Michele Cox, Jo Bradley, Val Smith, Carole Roberts, Joanne Olsen, Monique Van De Elzen, Tina Salu, Lesley McKechie, Jane Miles, Jan Horsman, Rebecca Van Der Vegt.

Manager: Fred Simpson.
Coach: Geoff Coulshed.
Tour Leader: Jenny Parkin.

SHORT SHOTS

JULIE DOLAN, Australia's captain, has once again changed clubs.

Two years ago, Julie moved back down from Queensland to join St George side, Forest Rangers.

Last year, the Australian skipper changed across to play for the Killarney club.

But this year, Julie has reverted back to Forest Rangers.

THE KILLARNEY club has folded and will take no part in this season's NSW Women's State League.

Killarney that boasted no fewer than four internationals recently, has also lost the services of their coach, Thomas Petrov.

Internationals Vicki Salmons, Mandi Langlaar, Margaret Petrov and Kristen Theile, all played for the Killarney club.

PUTNEY TOWN is a newly formed club to take its place in the NSW State League this season.

Putney, in the Gladesville Hornsby Association, will be coached by last season's Epping-Eastwood man, Simon Vincent, (Carol's brother).

Expected to join the Putney club, are Mandi Langlaar, Vicki Salmons, Jeneane Aitken, Janine Riddington and Michaela Hanningan.

NSW LEAGUE clubs this season, will have to field two teams each.

As well as their first team, each club is now required to field a reserve side as well to encourage youth material to the code.

Another newly formed club, Parramatta City, will be coached by former Soccerroo goakeeper, Alan Maher.



THE JUNIOR GAME

with TONY RACITI



OFFICIAL KICK-OFF

THE junior soccer season officially kicks off next month and officials of every Association are gearing themselves for the annual cry from misguided administrators claiming their players have been 'poached.'

spend their time holding specially convened meetings to decide whether or not a player has been enticed away from one club to play for another. For starters these meet-

be asked is where did that player who has been enticed from one club to another originally come from.

Obviously in most cases not from the same club who claim he has been poached.

I believe that poaching is non-existent and only an excuse by coaches and clubs, who for some reason, are not able to retain or attract players.

Players are not 'poached' by other clubs, they are attracted to them for varying reasons.

That being they may consider the club they have chosen to play for to be more professional, and their attitude to the game to be more advanced than the club they were playing for.

Importantly superior coaching, facilities, administration and the opportunity of playing in a stronger team or competition.

Or simply the club offers them better prospects in the game.

Poaching does not and never did exist. It is only a fallacy created by the weaker and envious clubs. A player's duty is to do anything possible to further his career and if that means moving to another club, he should not be prevented from doing so.

A local junior club can offer a player only so much.

There comes a time when he must leave these local clubs if he is to improve his knowledge of the game and attain valuable experience.

Once a player reaches the age of 13 his aim must be to play in the highest level of Soccer available to him in this State, and that is the NSW Youth League.

Most local clubs, however, take the wrong attitude to these players leaving, believing that Youth League clubs 'poach' these players.

They must realise that the boy must now make this move if he is to realise the standard which must be obtained to make the grade.

The attitude shown by these local junior sides destroys not only the improvement of Soccer, but can also destroy a player's career.

There is enough politics in Soccer as it is. Who are these officials to stand in the way of these boys?

When you think about it they are not worried about losing players, re-

placements are always available, but such an act is taken personally as a rejection of the club, and most importantly a personal attack on the coach's ego and image.

In other words they are bitterly annoyed at losing these players to other clubs and to save face their excuse in having lost a player is of course, the player was 'poached'.

The simple fact is they do not own these players, and a player should be given the freedom of choice with whom he would like to play.

No official should decide where a boy should play, but the boy himself.

Take this liberty off them and you destroy their passion for the game. Thousands of players have given the game away because they have been caught in this tug of war and the red tape between clubs.

Local junior clubs are the worst offenders.

They fail to realise that they are only the first stage in a junior player's development, and he must move on at some stage if he is going to make it and not end up playing All-Age or Premier League.

It is this attitude which destroys the whole purpose of having junior sides, and prevents the players with the given talent to realise it.

Common sense must prevail. Players should not be forced to play for a club if they do not wish to.

Clubs should not be singled out or punished for accepting these players.

Leave administration in the meeting room where it belongs, keep it off the playing fields, for in the end the only real loser is Australian Soccer.

In all the leading countries they consider a coach who gains the services of a talented youngster as a person doing his job for the club he is employed by, whereas in Australia a coach who goes about his duties in the same manner is labelled as a 'poacher.'

The code in this country has enough headaches through lack of publicity, and an anti-Soccer feeling throughout every state. But it seems that the real threat to soccer is the administrators themselves. Let the boys play where and with whom they so desire, that's what junior Soccer and sport in general is all about.

JUNIOR SOCCER WINS SCHOLARSHIP

THE State Government has awarded the NSW Soccer Federation an \$18,000 scholarship to develop junior Soccer.

The grant represents the largest of the fourth series of sports scholarships to be announced, and will be used to help fund coaching clinics at the new Valentine Park complex.

Under the direction of NSW Director of Coaching, Alan Vest, three 2-week intensive live-in clinics will be held this year, probably during the school holidays.

Thirty of the State's best 15 and 16 year-olds will benefit from the clinics with coaching by Vest and Sydney City's Eddie Thomson.

SOCCER INSURANCE

A STAGGERING \$400,000 in insurance claims was paid out to junior soccer players in New South Wales last year by National New Zealand Insurance.

Even allowing for the fact that New Zealand insurance received only \$300,000 in premium payments, a number of Associations have lodged a protest that their insurance levy is far too high.

Since the NSW Amateur Soccer Federation introduced the scheme for every junior Soccer player in NSW last season, to be covered for injury, a number of clubs and Associations have been totally opposed to the concept.

It is truly amazing that even allowing for all the criticism of the scheme, it is obvious players have rightly claimed for their medical expenses to cover costs.

It is anticipated that New Zealand Insurance will increase the premium slightly, which is paid directly by the NSW Amateur Federation, who in turn issues accounts to the Associations, where from there the hundreds of clubs in NSW are asked to contribute, based on the number of players within their respective clubs.

Obviously the word has

quickly spread that clubs will have to pay a higher premium in 1986, and already moves are underway from certain Associations to boycott the scheme entirely — a move which was attempted last year, failing dismally.

The attitude of these officials is truly amazing considering the scheme is a must as it protects the interests of every player who participates in the game.

The NSW Amateur Soccer Federation are to be commended having the foresight to introduce the scheme, which can only serve to make the junior game more professional.

But we now have a move from certain Associations intent on destroying the concept.

Claims have been made that the NSWASF introduced the scheme solely on the basis that New Zealand Insurance in return would sponsor the Amateur Federation for a substantial sum.

On this assumption,

Continued Over



MINI Ampol Cup action.

During this period of the year 100,000 players within the State will register to play soccer, and at least 20,000 of them will not be playing for the same club they played for last season.

But this reasonable and

normal turn of events is treated by certain officials and coaches as being disloyal, alternatively they claim that these players have been 'poached.' For the first eight weeks of the season committee's of every Association will

ings should not even be entertained, and secondly the player and parent of the boy involved should not be subjected to lengthy questioning of their decision to change clubs.

It is not up to administrators to decide where a boy should play, that decision is solely up to the player.

But we have had over the years numerous cases where administrators have prevented players transferring from one club to another.

These decisions are made purely and simply on the basis that the person making the complaint has strong ties with the committee making the decision.

Is it a crime for a junior coach to ask a player from another club to join his squad?

The player can then decide if he wishes to make a move or not.

Once he has made that decision, the matter should then be closed.

But unfortunately it is not, as bitter coaches and officials scream that their player has been 'poached.'

The question that must

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ANOTHER \$50,000 FOR PARKLEA

A \$50,000 donation from "FOOTY TAB" to further the development of Valentine Park, headquarters of the NSW Soccer Federation, was received by the Federation.

The cheque was presented by Michael Cleary, Minister of Sport, to the Federation's treasurer Charles Valentine at a special function in Sydney. Valentine, second longest serving member of the Federation's executive (15 years) said he is expecting a further \$30,000 donation from "Footy Tab."

The 70 year old American-born modest and shy Valentine came to Australia with the US marines in 1943 and decided to stay.

Two years later, he decided to introduce a new dish in Sydney namely "Chicken in the Basket."

He opened a restaurant by the same name in Pitt Street and within a short period became one of the most sought after restaurants in Sydney.

Through his Greek employees he became involved in Soccer, raising funds for the code at all levels.

He is deeply involved with the erection of Valentine Park's new accommodation and office

building. As a true treasurer, he keeps close watch on the progress of the build-

ing which he expects to be completed by August.

"So far we have received \$1.5 million from the Wran government and we hope they will keep up their goodwill," he said.

The whole complex, 65 acres of land, was valued at a total of \$6 million.

When completed it will have six pitches. The dam on the property provides 32 million litres of water to keep the pitches in tip top condition.

"I am working in a very close and good relationship with the project development manager Eric Arneil," Charlie said.

"We are very grateful to the Blacktown City Council for their tremendous assistance," he said.

"In return we provide employment to local tradesman and people who are working on the new building" he said.

"My only dream is to see Valentine Park the

core of Soccer in Australia."

His wife, Joan Valentine, known to most members of the code as "Mama Valentine" is in charge of Valentine Park's restaurant.



MICHAEL CLEARY, NSW Minister of Sport hands over the \$50,000 cheque to Charlie Valentine.

"I am patronising the local business houses by buying everything — all

the food, lollies, cigarettes, locally. All our meat, bread and all other food

items are purchased from Blacktown business people," she said.

Valentine Park was named after Charlie on July 27 1985, by Neville Wran at a special cere-

mony. It was known before as Parklea Soccer Complex.

The code owes the Valentines a great deal for their altruistic, unselfish, work and dedication.

JUNIOR CHAT

FOR the first time in the 29 year history of the NSW Sydney Branch, a woman has been elected to the presidency.

She is Mrs Florence Stephenson, who also doubles up as president of the Illawarra District Soccer Association.

Mrs Stephenson takes over from Harry Denning, who has been elected senior vice-president of the NSW Amateur Soccer Federation.

COACHES and managers have been appointed for the various NSW State squads.

They are Ian Lloyd (Under 13 coach), Terry Coates (Under 14 manager), Greg Ankudinoff (Under 14 coach), John Hedison (Under 15 manager), Max Groll (Under 15 coach).

NSW Director of Coaching Alan Vest is once again in charge of the Under 16 squad.

The Under 13 national titles will be played in Perth, the Under 14s

will travel to Brisbane, whilst the Under 15s play their title during the May school holidays in Canberra.

THE NSW Amateur Soccer Federation has recommended to their senior counterpart the re-appointment of Vic Dagles as coach and Rod Woods as manager of the Under 16 Kodak World Cup squad.

The eliminations for the tournament will be held in August in Taipei, with the final 16 playing in Canada in 1987.

CANTERBURY District Soccer Association has appointed well known Soccer Identity Lionel Brown as their Youth League convenor.

The appointment of Lionel Brown should bring about a change for Canterbury, who over the years have been struggling to attain the services of players for their four squads.

DURING the Easter break, over 100 NSW country players will converge on Parklea in the aim of being selected in the Under 13, 14, 15 and 16 squads for a goodwill tour during the May school holidays in Queensland and Northern NSW.

THE A.S. Tanner tournament will again be held this season for all Under 11 sides through the State.

St George Association has already received applications from country teams.

The tournament will be held over the Queen's birthday weekend.

APIA Junior Soccer club will play hosts to their Melbourne counterparts, Juventus next month, when the two clubs clash in their annual Challenge trophy.

The tournament will be held on March 9 at the new-look Lambert Park, which is shaping up as one of the best playing surfaces in Sydney.



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Continued from
previous page

some Associations claim this was the only reason that they are now receiving huge insurance accounts from the NSWASF.

The accounts are obviously high considering that there are Associations within NSW who have over 7000 players within their ranks.

Some Associations claim that these insurance payments are stretching their financial resources to the limit.

But it is not the Associations who are paying for the premium, but in fact the player's themselves, when they register with a club.

Last season every junior

player in the State was charged a levy of \$1.00, whereas senior amateur players had to pay \$14.00.

This year the junior fee remains unchanged, but owing to the fact that the proportion of claims stemmed from the senior amateur, their fees have been increased by \$7.00 per player.

that every junior player has compulsory insurance cover at the meagre price of \$1.00 per annum.

Hard working NSWASF secretary Frank Wilson said this week that the scheme had proved to be exceptionally successful.

"The introduction of the scheme has placed the junior game another step forward in the rapid development of the sport in this State," Mr Wilson said.

Wide World of Football



BULGARIA'S BORIS SAYS HE'S SORRY

BULGARIAN star defender Boris Mikhailov, banned for life less than a year ago, is back in favour and will play in the World Cup in Mexico.

Bold Boris was involved in disgraceful scenes in the Bulgarian Cup Final and was stripped of his international footballer privileges.

This meant he couldn't play football for the rest

of his life, had his car taken away, was forced to work as a labourer on the roads and surrendered several other perks.

Recently, though, Boris has appeared several times on television abjectly

apologising for his misdemeanours.

The Government stepped in to lift his ban, allowing the "lifer" to be brought back into Bulgaria's squad and fly to Mexico for World Cup

warm-up tour matches.

The big question to be asked now is... was Boris Mikhailov forgiven because of his TV apology or because Bulgaria's defence badly needs his talents for the World Cup?

MILLIONS IN DEBT

ALTHOUGH matches in Italy are watched by the biggest crowds in the world, the first division championship is not making any money.

It has been reported that Italian League clubs are currently \$80,000,000 in the red.

When players like Maradona and Rummenigge can pick up \$10,000,000 and \$4,000,000 respectively, the big gate receipts are easily swallowed up.

MUNOZ WILL QUIT

SPAIN'S national team manager Miguel Munoz has definitely decided it's time to retire - but not until he guides Spain through the World Cup in Mexico.

Munoz was captain of the remarkable Real Madrid side which won the initial European Cup in 1956.

Later he coached club sides but it is as an international team boss that he has achieved most.

Munoz steered Spain to the final of the European Championship in France in 1984 and he also eased the Spanish team into the 1986 World Cup, when Spain topped their qualifying group ahead of Scotland, Wales and Iceland.

AUSTRALIA is supposed to be the lucky country but we're not so lucky when it comes to proper Soccer stadiums.

Sydney, Australia's biggest city, has nothing better than the St George Stadium, with a capacity of around 12,000.

Compare that with the Cairo ground where England played Egypt. The capacity there is 130,000.



COVENTRY STILL SPEND

ALTHOUGH relegation-threatened Coventry City have just bought three new players, including International Alan Brazil from Manchester United, they still want to buy another front runner.

Coventry fancy Nottingham Forest's Garry Birtles and Nigel Clough.

They made an unsuccessful bid for Clough some months ago.

"The spending isn't

finished yet - there is still a piece to fit into the jigsaw," said Coventry boss Donald Mackay.

WRIGHT COULD BE WRONG FOR ENGLAND

ENGLAND have a headache at centre-half. First choice Mark Wright is far from an automatic choice.

Alvin Martin has his supporters for the position and Terry Butcher looks certain to win a World Cup squad spot.

Other candidates include Dave Watson and Terry Fenwick.

Even so, the central defensive chores, traditionally the strength of English teams, have not been allocated to any players yet.

'JUST ASK FOR CASH'

AT a time when most British clubs are desperate for a quid, Chelsea have money to burn.

The famous London club, facing serious financial crisis a couple of years ago, are ready to buy the first division championship.

Chairman Ken Bates told team manager John Hollins: "The money is there if you want it. Use it to buy anyone you want. If you need money for new players, just ask for it."



LAUGHING ALL WAY TO BANK

RON SAUNDERS earned a lot of sympathy after leaving Birmingham City but nobody should weep for him as far as his bank balance is concerned.

Birmingham chairman Ken Wheldon told the club's Annual Meeting that Saunders was a luxury Birmingham could not afford.

Wheldon revealed that when Saunders joined the club in February 1982 he was paid a "signing-on fee" of \$120,000. And while he was at the club,

Saunders and his coaching staff cost \$320,000 a year.

Chairman Wheldon called it "financial madness!"



NEW CBF BOSS SCRAPES HOME

RETIRED lawyer Otavio Pinto Guimaraes is the new president of the Brazilian Football Federation (CBF), but he was hardly swept into office in a landslide.

The voting in favour of Guimaraes was 13 to 12.

Maybe it will be difficult for the new Brazilian boss to rule, knowing he is not a unanimous choice, but he has faced problems

in the past and overcame them.

At 64, Guimaraes survived an operation for stomach cancer.

Apart from Soccer, his other great loves are horse

racing and motor racing. He comes from Rio's Botafogo club.

Guimaraes says he has one specific object - to reconcile the CBF with world football leader, Joao Havelange.

MARK WHO?

MARK BARHAM was just one of several forgettable players who toured Australia with the English international squad in 1983 and little has been heard of him since.

But Barham is back in the news. He has made the remarkable claim - "I'm the best winger in England."

That's a cocky claim from a player who is struggling to win back his old form after being 14 months out of action with a knee injury.

Barham, who plays for unfashionable Norwich City in the second division, says: "I was disappointed about being left out of the last England squad but there's still time for me to make the World Cup in Mexico."

There aren't many good wingers about. All I want is the chance to show what I can do."

BOB'S EACH WAY BET

FORMER Scottish international goalkeeper Bob Wilson didn't know which team to support when Arsenal played Luton Town recently.

Bob is goalkeeper coach... for Arsenal and Luton.

FIGURES PROVE

SOUTHAMPTON are certainly not the best-supported team in the first division but at least their fans remain loyal.

At three recent home games, Southampton's attendances were 13,167, 13,154 and 13,164. The variance is just 13.

Even stranger, perhaps, is the odd tale from Torquay United. In two successive matches at their Plainmoor ground, Torquay's crowd was 1,282.

10 DROP OUTS UPSET PLANS

YOU have to feel sympathy for England manager Bobby Robson who finds the needs of clubs constantly interfere with his attempts to give his national team top preparation for the World Cup in Mexico.

When Robson named his squad to play Egypt in Cairo recently, he expected a few withdrawals due to club commitments but he had more than a few.

In fact 10 players were unable to make the trip to Cairo.

They were Gary Bailey, Alvin Martin, Chris Waddle, Glenn Hoddle, John Barnes, Terry Butcher, Steve Hodge, Stewart Robson, Paul Bracewell, and Kerry Dixon.

It will be a real luxury for boss Robson next June to know he can select an England World Cup squad without any defections for club games!



ALVIN MARTIN (right) didn't go to Cairo.

WALSH SETTLED AFTER DALGLISH CHAT

PAUL WALSH, the Liverpool forward, has torn up his transfer request and says: "I want to play for Liverpool for the rest of my career - if they'll have me. And to prove it, I'm going to buy a house after living out of a suitcase for a year."

What caused this change of mind? Player-manager Ken Dalglish called Walsh into his office for a chat and assured him that, while he was playing well and scoring goals, he could always be sure of a first team spot.

That assurance caused Walsh to ask to be taken

off the transfer list.

After being dropped from the Liverpool side last October, Walsh was convinced there was no future for him at Anfield - so he requested a move.

He still has two years to run on his contract and looks forward to honouring the contract - and others in the future.

ALEX ANSWERS CAIRO CALL

ALEX FERGUSON, a Londoner, must be one of football's greatest fans, having watched England play all over the world.

Recently his wife presented Alex with an ultimatum... "choose me or Soccer!"

Superfan Alex made his choice by booking a plane ticket to Cairo to watch Egypt play England.

Now he's being sued for divorce but he is unrepentant, saying: "Watching football is far more important than the wife."

This 41-year-old character claims that his first love is the Fulham club.

That's not very flattering to his wife. Now if his first love had been Manchester United or Liverpool, it wouldn't have been so bad!

BATTERED BATER

BRISTOL ROVERS defender Phil Bater, 30, has broken his nose - and that's nothing to sniff at.

You see it's the eighth time this unfortunate fellow has fractured his hooter!



PAUL WALSH, seen here tangling with Bryan Robson, has settled his differences with Liverpool.

SCOTLAND's trip to Tel Aviv to play Israel in a World Cup warm-up gave Arsenal's Charlie Nicholas the chance to get back into international football - but he nearly blew it even before leaving London Airport.

Charlie turned up for the flight without his boots. Maybe he thought the Israelis would play in sand shoes.

TOP STAR

ARGENTINA claim they have found another Diego Maradona in River Plate's Enzo Francescoli.

Trouble is, Enzo is from Uruguay although his home base is Buenos Aires.

Playing for River Plate, Argentina's champions, Enzo banged in 19 goals in 27 games.

He is the darling of Argentina... and Uruguay.

KERRY DIXON, the Chelsea centre-forward, has his own official fan club and the latest member to be enrolled is Ken Bates - chairman of Chelsea.

In exchange for his \$6 fan club subscription, Bates was given a membership card, lapel badge, ballpoint pen, autographed photo of Kerry Dixon and a quarterly newsletter.

BUILD TEAM AROUND HODDLE!

GLENN HODDLE will prove in the World Cup in Mexico that he is a player of genuine world class.

That's the tip from Terry Venables, surveying England's Cup hopes from Barcelona.

Says Venables: "England has someone of such special talent in Hoddle that the whole team could be built around him."

"If you've got someone with this sort of talent, you have to fit him in."

Venables knows Hod-

dle has been criticised for lack of endeavour and not being a team man but he believes the Spurs midfielder will be a match-winner in Mexico.

Hoddle relies so much on skill and he is not a hard runner. In the rarefied Mexican atmosphere, this will not be a World Cup for chasers... according to Venables.



GLENN HODDLE - 'England's man'.

TAXING TIME FOR ITALIAN ACES

ITALY'S leading players are threatening to pull out of international matches if they cannot get satisfaction on the vexed matter of income tax.

When the Italians won the World Cup in 1982, they received huge bonuses which they claim were not taxable.

Italy's Finance Ministry has now produced a belated demand for tax, amounting to about one-third of the cash the players received.

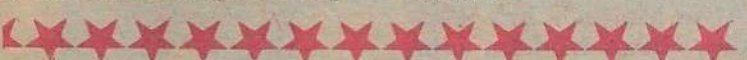
The Ministry insists the players deliberately evaded their tax commitments and a couple of Cup

stars, Paolo Rossi and Dino Zoff, may be taken to court in test cases.

The World Cup heroes claim the Football Federation had promised to meet the tax bill but this has been denied.

Federico Sordillo, the Federation chairman, says: "It is nonsense."

"International footballers think they are a race apart. They must pay their tax like any other citizens."



PORTO GET JOSEF

POLAND'S World Cup goalkeeper Josef Mlynarczyk has left French club Bastia to play for Portugal's FC Porto.

He is tipped to pose problems for England, Morocco and his new country, Portugal, in their Mexico World Cup group.

THERE has been a row between a Dane and a Dutchman... in England.

After Liverpool beat Ipswich Town 3-0 in the Milk Cup, Liverpool's Danish midfielder Jan Molby commented: "That was by far our easiest game of the season."

That unkind quote brought a response from Ipswich's Dutchman Romeo Zondervan who said: "Molby has got all our backs up. His remark was out of order. We are all angry because we have pride at stake as much as points."



THE ITALIAN World Cup squad celebrate in 1982 with a lap of honour. Now they're threatening an international boycott if the taxman doesn't get off their backs.

THE ASW WORLD ROUND-UP

WEST GERMANY

Bochum v K'lautern	3-2
Duesdorf v L'kusen	2-1
Hamburg v Bayern	0-0
Nuremberg v Bremen	2-2

Other matches were postponed.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bremen	23	16	4	3	63	32	36
Bayern	23	14	4	5	50	24	32
Bor M'bach	22	12	7	3	50	31	31
L'kusen	23	10	7	6	46	33	27
Hamburg	23	11	4	8	35	23	26

NORTHERN IRELAND

Ards v P'down	3-0
B'mena v Linfield	1-1
Carrick v Newry	3-1
C'lers v Larne	2-2
G'avon v Bangor	2-1
G'toran v C'raine	0-2

PORTUGAL

P'nense v Benfica	0-3
Sporting v B'nenses	0-0
Setubal v Penafiel	4-0
Covilha v S'gueiros	0-0
Boavista v Academ	4-0
G'mares v Aves	2-0
Porto v Bragas	5-1
Maritimo v Chaves	1-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Benfica	21	16	3	2	42	8	35
Sporting	21	14	5	2	44	11	33
Porto	21	15	3	3	44	15	33
G'maraes	21	11	7	3	35	17	29

FRANCE

Le Havre v Rennes	2-1
Lille v Brest	1-1
Auxerre v Sochaux	1-0
Nice v Mulhouse	0-1
Beauvais v Lens	1-2
Laval v Angers	0-0
Bastia v Chaumont	4-1
Paris SG v Montpellier	2-1
Les Ceres v Racing	0-4
Evry v Tours	0-0
Strasbourg v Meaux	3-0
Red Star v Bordeaux	0-1
Pont-SE v M'seilles	0-0
Sete v Blenod	0-3
C'neau v Limoges	1-1

ITALY

Como v Milan	1-1
Inter v Bari	1-0
Juventus v Torino	1-1
Lecce v Atalanta	2-1

Napoli v F'tina	0-0
Pisa v Udinese	0-0
Roma v A'lino	5-1
S'doria v Verona	0-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Juve	21	13	7	1	31	8	33
Roma	21	14	2	5	34	16	30
Napoli	21	8	9	4	21	14	25
Milan	21	8	9	4	20	15	25
Torino	21	7	9	5	21	16	23
Inter	21	8	7	6	26	24	23
F'tina	21	6	10	5	21	16	22
S'doria	21	6	8	7	21	17	20
Verona	21	7	6	8	19	26	20

BELGIUM

Mechelen v Lierse	1-1
Beveren v B'shoot	3-0
Cercle v C'leroi	1-1
Molenbeek v Ghent	0-1
Liegeois v Kortrijk	2-0
Lokeren v W'schei	3-0
St Liege v A'lecht	1-0
Antwerp v C Brugge	1-1
Waregem v Seraing	3-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cl Brugge	26	17	6	3	55	24	40
A'lecht	26	16	7	3	64	25	39
Waregem	26	13	5	8	44	26	31
Ghent	25	12	7	6	38	24	31
Standard	26	11	9	6	39	24	31
Liege	24	12	5	7	37	28	29

TURKEY

Besiktas v A'gucu	3-0
G'birliqi v F'bahce	2-2
G'saray v K'rispor	5-2
Saki Spor v Sam'spor	0-0
Tr'spor v Sariyer	1-1
Orduspor v M'yaspor	4-3
Esk'por v Altay	3-3
Z'dakspor v K'lispor	2-2
Rizespor v D'lispor	1-0

BULGARIA

Etur v Beroe	1-2
Dunay v Trakia	1-1
Sredets v Slavia	0-1

Lo Plovdiv v Silven	3-2
Sp Varna v Vitosha	1-2
Akademik v Pirin	1-0
Vratsa v Sp Plevn	2-0
Lok Sofia v Ch More	0-2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Beroe	19	12	2	5	34	30	26
Trakia	19	10	5	4	54	27	25
Slavia	19	11	2	6	40	25	24
Lo Plovdiv	19	10	3	6	38	30	23
Sredets	19	11	0	8	37	25	22

SPAIN

Hercules v Cadiz	1-1
Sevilla v V'dolid	1-0
Bilbao v R Madrid	1-2
Osasuna v Celta	2-1
At Madrid v Sporting	1-1
Zaragoza v Sociedad	3-1
Racing v Betis	1-1
Espanol v Valencia	2-1

GREECE

Apollon v O'kos	1-0
AEK v K'maria	1-0
Ethnikos v Doxa	2-1
Iraklis v PAOK	0-0
Larisa v Yannina	3-0
Ofi v P'nios	1-0
P'naikos v P'haiki	3-2
P'raikos v Aris	1-1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
P'naikos	20	14	3	3	41	21	31
Iraklis	20	10	6	4	24	13	26
Aris	20	9	8	3	27	18	26
Ofi	20	11	3	6	28	20	25
AEK	20	9	6	5	28	18	24
P'nios	20	10	4	6	29	23	24

QUARTER FINAL DRAW

QUARTER-FINALS of the Scottish F.A. Cup.

Alloa or Motherwill v Dundee United or Kilmarnock.

Hibernian or Ayr v Celtic.

Hamilton or Hearts v St Mirren or Falkirk.
Dundee or Airdrieonians v Aberdeen.
Matches March 8.

LEAGUE'S LEADING SCORERS

DIVISION ONE

29 — Gary Lineker (Everton)
21 — Kerry Dixon (Chelsea)
20 — Frank McAvennie (West Ham)

DIVISION TWO

19 — Kevin Drinkell (Norwich)
18 — Keith Bertschin (Stoke)
17 — Frank Bunn (Hull)

DIVISION THREE

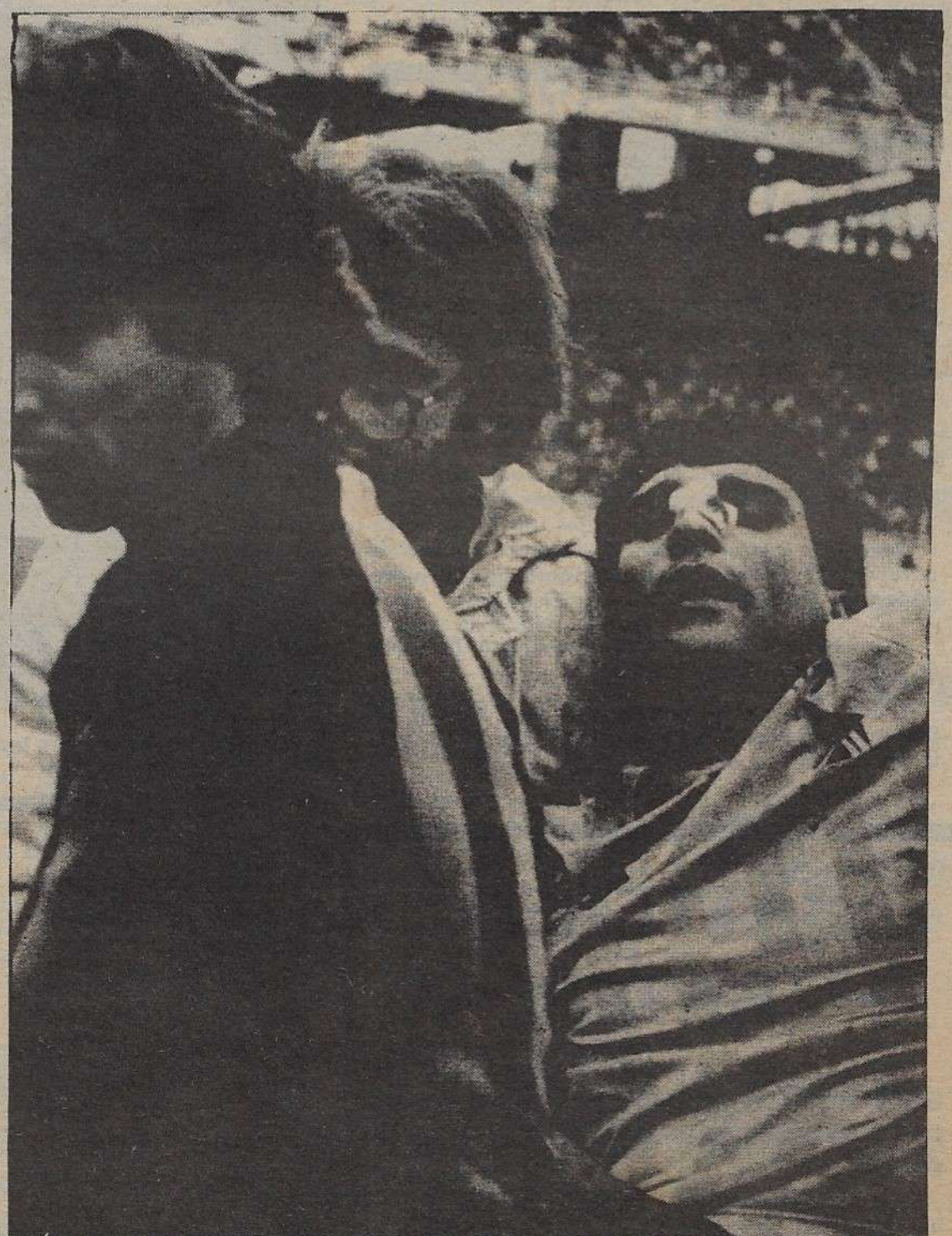
24 — Colin Clarke (Bournemouth)
22 — Keith Walwyn (York)
20 — Trevor Senior (Reading)

DIVISION FOUR

24 — Steve Taylor (Rochdale)
21 — Stuart Rimmer (Chester)
20 — Mark Leonard (Stockport)

THE English Football League is finally set to come into line with its counterparts in Europe on the subject of substitutes.

The League's management committee decided yesterday to table a proposal at the League's annual meeting in June that clubs be allowed to use two substitutes next season, instead of one.



With his badly-injured nose bandaged up, the distressed Jimmy Patikas is carried off the field in the AEK v Olympiakos match in Athens - an exclusive ASW picture.